



Farmers' Perceptions of Farming in King County:

The Challenges, Industry Trends and Needed
Resources and Services

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Ag • ri • cul • ture (noun)

[Date: 15th century; Etymology:
Middle English, from Middle French,
from Latin *agricultura*, from *ager*
field + *cultura* cultivation]:

The science, art, or practice of
cultivating the soil, producing crops,
and raising livestock and in varying
degrees the preparation and
marketing of the resulting products.

—from Merriam-Webster Dictionary

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Executive Summary

On July 1, 2008 the King County Council adopted Ordinance 16172 calling for a study be conducted “to address the future of agriculture” in the County’s zoned agriculture production districts (APDs). The King County Agriculture Commission with the aid of the King County Ag Programs staff within the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) was charged with the task of completing this report dubbed the *FARMS Report* or *Future of Agriculture: Realize Meaningful Solutions Report* by January 1, 2010. The Ordinance 16172 also required the farming community’s input to be included in the study’s planning process. As a result, the County held five public meetings and conducted a mail-in and online survey to collect the input of local farmers. This professional project of a University of Washington graduate student is a contribution to the larger *FARMS Report*. This report focuses specifically on identifying the farmers’ perceptions of farming in King County based on the collected feedback.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the farmer’s survey responses and public meeting comments are categorized into three general themes: (1) major challenges farmers confront, (2) emerging trends in farming and (3) needed resources and services to keep farming viable in the county. The themes identified reflect the perceptions of farmers through the compilation of comments from 89 surveys and over 170 public meeting participants. A comparison of the findings to Washington State’s *The Future of Farming: Strategic Plan for Washington Agriculture 2020 and Beyond* (2009) and King County’s *Forest and Farms Report* (1996) demonstrate that the barriers farmers identified are not longstanding and necessarily unique to King County. The report also reviews commonly used agriculture protection regulations and policies in United States and takes a historical look at the rural landscape in King County and agriculture programming implemented in King County over the past several decades. The report findings are solely based on the farmers’ perceptions which are not necessarily in alignment with the general public’s views on agriculture. Their views and opinions are at times contrary to other county priorities. For example, some farmers expressed deep

frustration with environmental regulations which they believe are an infringement on their property rights and impede their operations. However, agriculture is a major contributor to environmental issues (i.e. poor water quality, polluted soils, habitat destruction, etc.) and County, State and Federal regulations have been established to protect this public interest. Further compounding the issue, there is also a paradox within themes identified. While farmers are concerned with the protection of property rights, they at the same time feel the county should be more invested in agriculture through providing financial assistance and other resources for farmers. Herein lies the challenge of striking a balance between justifying public support for agriculture and protecting the private business interests of farmers. This report offers an opportunity to expand the discussion and debate about the future of agriculture in King County.

In the face of increasing budgetary constraints, the County has begun to question their role in agriculture protection programming. In the fall of 2008, staff supporting the King County Ag programs was slated to be cut from the County's annual budget. Fortunately, the Agriculture Commission, representatives of organizations and agencies greatly impacted by the decision (i.e. neighborhood farmers' markets) and residents, both urban and rural, spoke out against the cut at a series of public hearings. As the County continues to determine its future role in agriculture, it should consider the challenges farmers confront as described in this report. Farmers' ability to comprehend the intricacies of the local regulations and maneuver through the permitting system are dependent on the support and assistance the local government provides. Conversely, as a regulatory body, the County itself needs to increase its understanding of farming operations and related land use needs. For example, agricultural commercial buildings are used differently than commercial buildings in urban settings and thus universal codes, largely tailored for urban uses, can be a hindrance to farming operations and their overall economic viability. Without the appropriate staff and programming focused on agriculture *within* the local government, these needs will easily be overlooked. Over thirty years ago the County recognized the economic and cultural significance of its agriculture sector and sought to protect it through what is now a comprehensive program. To remove its support now

would be to the detriment of not only the farmers as well as the urban population but also farming communities in metropolitan areas throughout the country who turn to King County as a leader and pioneer of agriculture protection.

Chapter 1: Introduction

For over forty years, King County and its residents have recognized the importance of keeping farming viable in the county.¹ With public support, local planning and policymaking has worked to protect some of the most fertile lands for agriculture from being developed and has promoted the business of farming. However, due to an intricate web of regulatory control at multiple governmental levels (i.e. federal, state and county), financial constraints, encroaching development from the urban fringe, and rising environmental concerns, King County farmers are challenged today to remain in the agriculture industry. On July 1, 2008, the King County Council adopted Ordinance 16172. The resulting report will address the viability of farming in the county and the continued protection of farmland. Section 9 of the ordinance provides the details of this request:

A. The department of natural resources and parks and the King County agriculture commission shall convene a planning process to address the future of agriculture in the agricultural production districts ("APDs"). Participants in this planning process should include representatives from the department of development and environmental services, the King Conservation District and property owners representing a diversity of interests in the APD.

B. By no later than January 1, 2010, the department and the agriculture commission shall provide the council a report relating to the future of agriculture within the APDs, as well as recommendations for legislation regarding the allowed size of agricultural accessory buildings.

The County's Agriculture Commission, with the aid of the King County Ag Programs staff within the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP), is charged with the task of completing this report dubbed the *FARMS Report* or *Future of Agriculture: Realize Meaningful Solutions Report*. The Agriculture Division's FARMS study team has identified six main questions to be addressed in the report. The questions are:

1. What specific agricultural activities will most likely contribute to the economic stability of the county's farm sector?

¹ The terms "County" and "county" are frequently used throughout this report. "County" refers to the government entity and department and services provided by the jurisdiction; "county" refers to the general public, providing a geographic boundary.

2. How can we continue to preserve the agricultural lands within the APDs and rural areas in the future?
3. How can we nurture and promote the business of farming for the future?
4. What should be the allowed size of an “agricultural accessory building?”
5. What is the role of King County and other agencies (i.e. King Conservation District) in supporting farming in the future?
6. What are the potential funding sources, and how might these and existing funding sources be allocated to support agriculture in the future?

Recognizing the report’s potential impact on the farming community, the county agriculture commission and staff have sought the opinions of the farming community through a series of public meetings and a questionnaire. As a component of the larger *FARMS Report*, this report provides an analysis of the primary data collected from these two survey instruments.

This report’s methodology (*Chapter 3*) is a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of farmers’ feedback. Through compiling the open-ended comments collected from the surveys and noting frequencies, the farmers’ comments are broken into three general themes: (1) major concerns and challenges, (2) emerging trends or adaptations in the farming industry and (3) needed resources and services. The findings (*Chapter 4*) provide a synopsis of each theme identified and are solely representative of the farmers’ feedback. A discussion (*Chapter 5*) follows that draws comparison between the report’s findings to two studies of similar focus: Washington State’s *The Future of Farming: Strategic Plan for Washington Agriculture 2020 and Beyond* (2009) and King County’s *Forest and Farms Report* (1996).

The analysis of farmers’ perceptions is complemented by background research (*Chapter 2*) in an effort to provide context to the identified themes. This context is developed through constructing a timeline of King County’s role in preserving farming and farmland and describing current land use and farm operation conditions. Additionally, this section includes a discussion of farmland preservation efforts at the local level throughout the United States.

The findings in this report are intended to provide the King County Council, the Agriculture Commission, the Department of Natural Resources and other county departments (e.g. Department of Development and Environmental Services) and non-governmental agencies (e.g. King Conservation District) with a critical look at the farmers' perspective of the future of the agriculture industry in the county. The information can assist the County as they determine what the local government's potential role is in preserving farms and farming.

Chapter 2: Background

This chapter reviews commonly used agriculture protection regulations and policies in United States and takes a historical look at the rural landscape in King County and agriculture programming implemented in King County over the past several decades. This background research provides the context for the findings presented later in the report. The research familiarized the author with King County's past and current agriculture sector which was critical in analyzing the farmers' survey and public meeting comments.

While King County, Washington is more known for its thriving metropolitan areas and industrial sector, agriculture has also played a significant role in its 150 year history. Founded in 1852, King County saw little agriculture activity until the arrival of white settlers. By 1946, the county contained over 6,400 acres of farmland (Washington State, 1956). Primarily serving the local growing metropolitan population, the county had numerous dairy cooperatives as well as vegetable and fruit producers. During World War II, war-supporting industries such as Boeing flourished, and the county saw a population increase from 505,000 in 1940 to 733,000 in 1950. This 45 percent increase was the beginning of population growth that would cause remarkable changes to today's rural landscape.

Along with several other metropolitan counties (i.e. Carroll County, Maryland) throughout the United States, King County turned to land use planning as a mechanism to protect farmland from being further developed as early as the 1960s. Before providing a historical account of King County's agriculture protection efforts and existing farmland conditions, a discussion of the land use controls designed to protect farming is first presented.

Overview of Agriculture Protection Programming

In addition to development pressure and rising land values common in the past century, farmers near the urban fringe face a unique set of challenges in contrast to farms not near a metropolitan area. The "urban fringe" is part of a metropolitan county or region that is sparsely developed (less than two houses an acre) through low-density

development of houses, road, commercial structures and utility. This landscape often caters to urban users, such individuals working in the city while “living in the country,” while providing the impetus for further growth (Heimlich and Anderson, 2001, p. 2). The close proximity to concentrated urban land uses (i.e. 10-40 miles) and the blurred line between urban and rural in which there is a mix of nonfarm neighbors dispersed in large open spaces predominantly used for agriculture purposes create conflicts between the different land users. Daniels and Bowers note several problems that are well-known to farming communities near the urban fringe across the country. They are as follows (1997, p. 5):

1. Developers bid up land prices beyond what farmers can afford and tempt farmers to sell their land for development.
2. The greater number of people living in or next to the country side heightens the risk of confrontation between farmers and non farmers.
3. Complaints increase from nonfarm neighbors about manure smells, chemical sprays, noise, dust, and slow-moving farm machinery on commuter roads.
4. Farmers suffer crop and livestock loss from trespass, vandalism, and dog attacks.
Stormwater runoff from housing developments washes across farmland, causing erosion, and competition for water supplies increases.
5. As farmers become more of a minority in their communities, nuisance ordinances may be passed, restricting farming practices and in effect making farming too difficult to continue.
6. As farms are developed, farm support businesses are pushed out. Remaining farmers stop investing in their farms as they expect to sell their land for development in the near future.
7. Open space becomes harder to find, the local economy changes, and rural character fades.

What is apparent in this set of problems is that farming near the urban fringe is a two-pronged issue. First, as described in the previous section, the farmland itself is under threat of being converted into non-farm uses, as evident from the declining supply of farmland. Second, agriculture as a business is threatened as farming communities compete with urban interests and operations became less and less profitable. The public meeting comments and survey responses collected for this study reveal that the problems outlined by Daniels and Bowers are challenging King County farmers today. For instance, farmers are concerned about increasingly high costs of land, incompatible land uses nearby, loss of

infrastructure and businesses supporting farming, and low priority of rural interests and needs in a predominantly urban county (*see Chapter 4*).

In the wake of the declining amount of prime farmland in urban areas, local governments have designed and implemented a range of land use tools and policies to protect farmland as well as lessen the impact of urbanization on farming operations. Tools such as agriculture zoning, differential tax assessment programs, transfer and purchase of development rights (TDR/PDR), and right-to-farm laws first came into use in the 1970s. Table 2 provides a description of the various tools utilized by local governments to protect farmland and also notes which tools are utilized in King County. Today, these tools are have become commonplace for metropolitan farming areas across the nation working to protect their agriculture sector.

Table 1: Land Use Tools for Agriculture Protection²

Tool	Description	King County
Agriculture Districts	A voluntary formation of a district by landowners. Landowners sign a petition to enroll land in a district for a designated amount of time. Landowners in the district may receive incentives such as tax relief, exemption from local nuisance ordinances and limitation of extension of public services (e.g. sewer). No restrictions are placed on land uses.	Not applied.
Agriculture Zoning	Zoning designed specifically to limit development and promote agriculture uses. Regulates minimum lot sizes, permitted land uses, setback and subdivision requirements. Definition of agriculture uses varies according to each zoning ordinance.	In 1985, the King County Comprehensive Plan designated approximately 40,000 acres as “agriculture production districts.” The five districts are managed within the County’s zoning ordinance.
Comprehensive Planning	Plan guiding a community’s long-term growth. The goals and objectives can include agriculture protection measures.	Mandated by Washington State’s Growth Management Act, the King County Comprehensive Plan includes a rural element to conserve and enhance the county’s rural communities and resource lands including agriculture.
Conservation Easement	A voluntary legal document that restricts specified activities to protect open space uses such as farming. The easement is perpetual and runs with the land. Easements are granted by property owner to a conservation agency or government agency.	Four land trusts exist in King County. They include: Cascade Land Conservancy, PCC Farmland Trust, Save Habitat and Diversity of Wetlands Organization, Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust

² Descriptions written by author. Sources: Coughlin, 1981; Daniels and Bowers, 1997; Toner, 1978.

Tool	Description	King County
Differential Assessment	Property tax breaks provided wherein farmland is valued for its current use rather than highest and best use. The difference in assessed value between the highest and best use and the agriculture use determines the tax break. There are three types of differential assessment: pure preferential, deferred taxation and restrictive agreements.	Washington State adopted the Open Space Taxation Act in 1970 allowing the County Assessor to value property at current use.
Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)	Voluntary sale of a piece of property's development rights in which the development rights are designated to a receiving area. The land sold from the PDRs is restricted to agriculture uses.	County established the Farm Preservation Program in 1979 through a \$50 million voter-approved bond. 95% of the property must remain undeveloped. Over 13,200 acres have been protected to date.
Right-to-Farm Legislation	Legal protection for farmers from nuisance suits for standard farming practices such as odors, noise and slow machinery on roads.	There has been effort to adopt a county right-to-farm law. Other Washington counties (i.e. Snohomish) have such ordinances.
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)	Voluntary sale of a piece of property's development rights to a government agency or land trust. Land is restricted to agriculture uses.	Due to the locally supported PDR program, TDRs have not been utilized for farmland protection.

Widely adopted by metropolitan areas throughout the country, these land use tools vary from being incentive-based through tools encouraging producers to stay in the business of farming (i.e. tax breaks) to regulatory-based tools limiting and controlling development. Though some tools, such as agriculture zoning, are more commonly used than others, it is critical to note that no single tool alone can successfully protect the agriculture sector. Daniels and Bowers emphasize it is, a *package* of tools and policies designed to address the specific needs of the community that increases the success of an agriculture protection program (p. 103). Furthermore, an integrated approach that recognizes the competing and supporting interests within a metropolitan region, such as ensuring housing and employment opportunities, providing utilities and public services, protecting environmentally sensitive areas and remaining fiscally secure, contribute to a program's success (Coughlin, 1981, p. 26; Toner, 1978, p. 4).

Without the support of the general public and local officials, farmland protection programming derives little success for the farmer. While protecting farmland and

agriculture activities are the primary goals of these programs, secondary objectives such as protecting natural habitats, preserving agrarian heritage and providing recreational opportunities also play a role in generating the much-needed political will for successful agriculture protection programming. A host of studies analyzing the effectiveness of agriculture preservation programming note the importance of considering the array of private and public benefits in program development (Deaton et. al., 2003; Duke and Aull-Hyde, 2002; Lynch and Musser, 2001; Kline and Wichelns, 1996). The impact of secondary objectives on farming is evident in this study from the public meeting comments and survey responses. Farmers noted emerging trends in their operations to meet local market demands such as developing “agriculture tourism” opportunities and adopting conservation management practices such as salmon recovery efforts (*see Chapter 4*). Though the list of tools shown in Table 1 were first developed by local governments over thirty years ago and still remain the primary tools used farmland protection today, planning practitioners and scholars are continually evaluating their effectiveness and seeking ways to meet the range of goals while maximizing the public and private benefits.

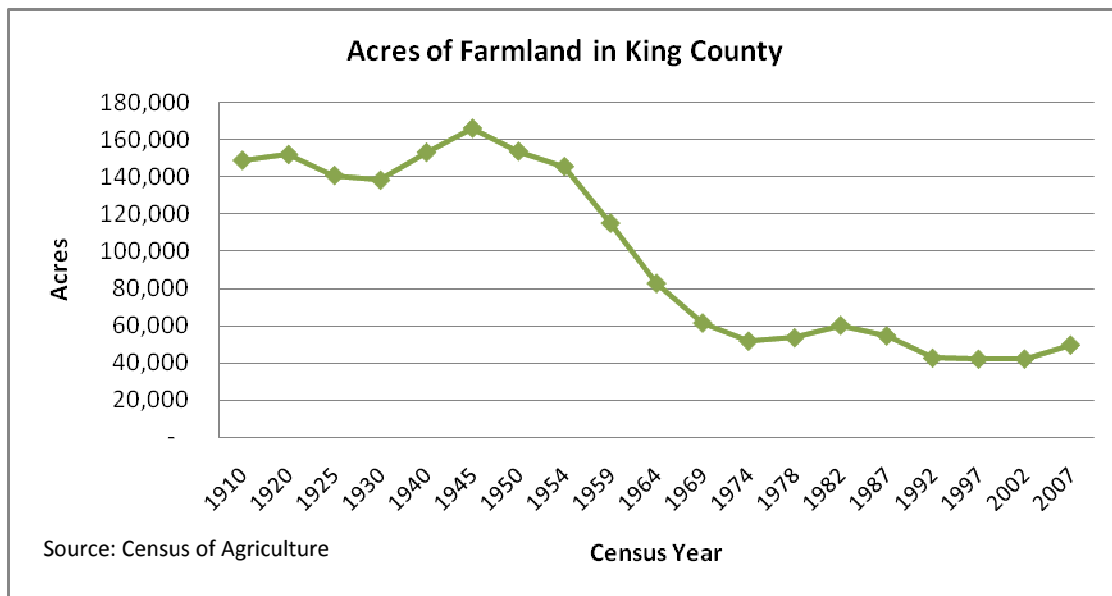
King County’s Changing Rural Landscape

The first half of the twentieth century saw a continual growth in King County’s agriculture land base. Land originally cleared for logging purposes was sold off in 10-, 20- and 40- acre plots to farmers that primarily produced for the local population. Land that was cultivated for farmland was primarily located near the new settlements, due to the accessibility, and in valleys where the soil quality was most fertile and required little irrigation. By 1945, King County reached a peak of 6,495 farms cultivating 165,635 acres (U.S. Census of Agriculture); however, by 1954, the county lost nearly 20,000 acres to non-agriculture uses. Referring to the nine-year decline, Washington State Department of Agriculture reported “... area in farms and number of farms have been decreasing. This indicates some abandonment of farming for other employment, and the increasing use of some land for residences and industrial purposes. In recent years considerable farmland in the Duwamish, Green and Sammamish Valleys has been taken out of agriculture” (1956, p.

28). According to the Census of Agriculture, the amount of farmland continued to decline over the next few decades. The post-WWII boom in population led to two-thirds of farmland being consumed by sprawling development within a thirty-year period (Calthorpe and Fulton, 2001, p. 160). During this severe loss in farmland from 1945 to 1974, King County's population more than doubled. In order to accommodate the growth, existing municipalities expanded and 15 new suburban communities incorporated (Reinartz, 2002, p. 9).

Figure 1 depicts the county's increase and decrease of farmland over the past century.³

Figure 1

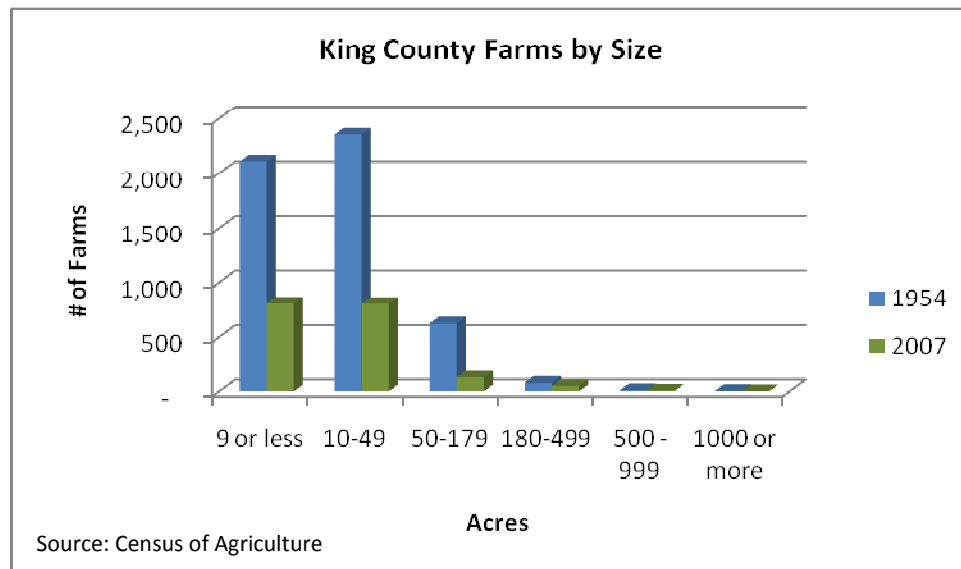


In 1945, agriculture land accounted for 12 percent of the county's land mass. As of 2007, it has been reduced to four percent. Figure 2 provides a comparison of the number

³ The Census of Agriculture has changed the definition of a "farm" nine times since 1850 when it was first established. The number of farms and acreage in farms has varied as a result. The current definition, last revised in 1974, is "a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year" (USDA, 2007, p. vii). However, the Census also states: "this includes farms with sales of less than \$1,000 but having the potential for sales of \$1,000 or more. Some of these farms had no sales in the census year. It provides information on all report form items for farms that normally would be expected to sell agricultural products of \$1,000 or more." In general, data prior to 1974 is not fully comparable to 1969 and earlier census years.

farms according to their size between 1954 and 2007 and shows that the loss severely impacted smaller size farms that accounted for a majority of the farms. Overall, there has been a 65 percent decrease in the number of acres farmed since the mid-1940s.

Figure 2



King County recognized early on the detrimental effect sprawl was having on the county's stock of agriculture land and began implementing farmland protection measures in the 1960s to thwart sprawl from consuming more land. These efforts are evident between 1974 and 2007 when the amount of farmland declined by only 14 percent—the portion of county land used for agriculture purposes remained at four percent for over thirty years (see Table 2).

Table 2: Historical Trends of Acres Farmed and Number of Farms

Farms	1945	1954	1974	2007
# of farms	6,495	5,181	1,022	1,790
Acres of farmland	165,635	145,111	51,368	49,285
% of total county land	12%	11%	4%	4%

King County's Agriculture Protection Programming

The 1960s saw the first formal efforts to protect farming in King County. The *King County Comprehensive Plan* in 1964 by identified areas for continued agriculture use by stating the goal of “protection of certain agricultural flood-plain, forest and mineral resource areas from urban type development” (p. II-4). Soon to follow, in 1965 the Puget Sound Governmental Conference (PSGC) formed through electing officials and the adoption of a regional comprehensive plan that included four policies concerning preservation of agriculture. Providing a springboard for farmland preservation programming at the local government level, the policies focused on promoting local governments to adopt agriculture zoning, endorsement of a current use taxation program and establishing guidelines for preserving a supply of farmland based on soil quality and other conditions appropriate for agriculture.

Over the next ten years several studies were conducted at the regional and county level to evaluate the land use and economic conditions in regard to agriculture. The first of those studies was published in 1974 by PSGC; the *Regional Agriculture, Land Use Technical Study* focused on farming conditions and issues in King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Examining the regional costs and benefits of agriculture and what means are necessary to keep agriculture viable, this early study's purpose resembles many of the similar concerns that today's *FARMS Report* intends to address. Additionally—and perhaps more importantly—the study highlights that, in order for the agriculture sector to remain viable, successful programming includes a two-pronged approach: the preservation of farmland and the promotion of agriculture activities. According to the study:

...the maintenance of agriculture involves two separate endeavors: the maintenance of a land base and the use of that land base. The preservation of prime agricultural land without promoting agricultural use will result in extensive tracts of idle, unproductive land. Conversely, the promotion of agricultural activity would be a pointless gesture without an adequate land base for the activity.

(PSGC, p. 73)

The interest of preserving farmland was not solely government interest. Through the rise of public concern, the King County Council adopted a series of ordinances and motions by the King County Council calling for further protection measures. They include:

- Ordinance 1096 to establish a policy that “Class II and III soils having agricultural potential and other classified or unclassified land presently being farmed shall be reserved for current and anticipated needs” (1/10/1972)
- Ordinance 1839 “to preserve prime agricultural lands and significant other farmlands in the open space system” by setting criteria for preservation and implementation policies (11/05/1973)
- Motion 2251 to establish a moratorium on the further development of county agriculture land (12/22/1975)
- Motion 2252 for the “development of policy and programs which protect King County agricultural lands” (12/22/1975)
- Ordinance 3064 establishing eight agricultural districts in which the approval of permit applications, new sewer connections and public projects did not adversely affect agriculture in the districts (1/31/1977)
- Ordinance 4341 calls for elections to authorize the “issuance of general obligation bonds” for the acquisition of development rights of farmland meeting the County’s eligibility requirements (6/18/1979)

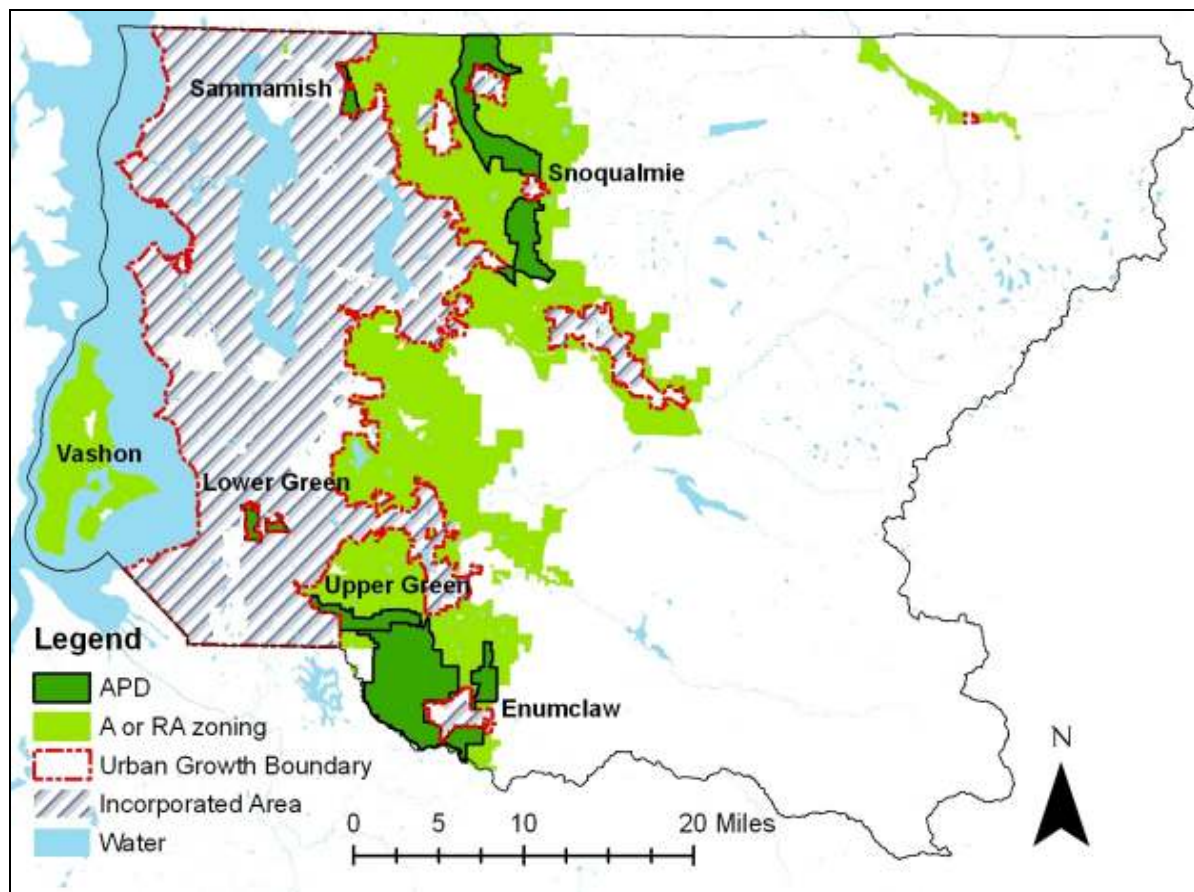
As a result of increasing public and government interest, the County’s Office of Agriculture was directed to research, develop and implement programming to address the problems confronting farmers. For example, Motion 2252 prompted the Department of Planning and Community Development to conduct the *King County Agriculture Study: Economic Factors Affecting King County Agriculture Production* (1976); the study provides extension documentation of the economic conditions and trends in agriculture. Soon to follow was the *Purchase of Development Rights to Retain Agricultural Lands: An Economic Study* conducted during the ordinance 2251’s moratorium on development, informing the County to consider placing a bond issue in support of a PDR program (1978). As a result, a

\$50 million voter-approved bond⁴ was passed in 1979, and the County PDR program, Farmland Preservation Program, was established. Throughout the 1980s the County acquired development rights to protect 12,600 acres of farmland through the program. County efforts to protect farmland expanded when the 1985 King County Comprehensive Plan designated approximately 40,000 acres as Agriculture Products Districts (APDs). The APDs are intended to be long-term designations in which agriculture should be the principal land use within the APD and land uses adjacent to APDs should be designed to limit conflicts with agriculture. The five areas zoned as APDs (see Figure 3) were determined through the following criteria to increase their potential to remain as agriculture use:

1. Soils are capable of productive agriculture (Class II and III soils);
2. Land is undeveloped or contains only farm-related structures;
3. Parcel sizes are predominantly 10 acres or larger; and
4. Much of the land is used for agriculture, or has been in agricultural use in the recent past. (King County Comprehensive Plan, 1985, p. 113)

⁴ A \$35 million bond was first put on the ballot in 1978 with 59.77% in favor—narrowly missing the 60% required vote. An extensive public-media campaign was conducted by a citizen-based group, *Save Our Local Farmlands Committee*, and the \$50 million bond was passed November 6th, 1979 with 62.96% votes (Save Our Local Farmlands Committee, 1979).

Figure 3: King County Agricultural Areas⁵



*Areas zoned as “A” (agricultural) and “RA” (rural area) also include farmland; however, these areas do not have the long-term designations as intended in the APDs (King County Comprehensive Plan 1985, p. 114).

While the County’s efforts from the 1960s through the 1980s essentially thwarted the consumption of farmland by protecting a fertile land base from development, a combination of social, economic and regulatory factors have continued to reduce the profitability of farming in the county over the last few decades. Recognizing the need to address these barriers, the County has continually expanded its programming. In 1996, DNRP hired a consulting team to conduct the *Farm and Forest Report*, a study detailing the specific barriers farmers faced and strategies the County could carry out to address those challenges. Many of the barriers described in the report are still prevalent today as evident

⁵ Map created by author. GIS layers provided by King County GIS Center through Washington State Geospatial Data Archival (WAGDA).

in the findings section. Informed by extensive community outreach efforts, a series of programs have since continued or expanded. They include:

- *Agriculture Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP)*: provides technical and financial assistance for farmers who need agricultural ditch maintenance.
- *Agriculture Commission*: A body of representatives that have expertise and interest in the agriculture sector. Commissioners work directly with public officials, county staff, farm producers and citizens on policies and regulations influencing and impacting farming.
- *Puget Sound Fresh (PSF)*: helps connect farmers to urban consumers and businesses through marketing and promotional activities for direct marketing opportunities (i.e. farmers markets and CSAs⁶). Now managed by Cascade Harvest Coalition.
- *FarmLink*: matches retiring farmers with current or new farmers for mentoring. Now managed by Cascade Harvest Coalition.
- *Livestock Management Program*: assists farmers in meeting the Livestock Management Ordinance (K.C.C.21A.30) requirements of protecting environmental qualities (i.e. water quality) from the impact of livestock.

The above summary of programming is not wholly representative of all efforts being made to protect farming. Other agencies have worked in conjunction with the County or through individual efforts to ensure farming remains a viable sector in the county. Agencies such as King Conservation District, Washington State University (WSU) King County Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency, to name a few, have made considerable contributions to the countywide wide effort to protect farming.

⁶ CSAs or “community supported agriculture” connect residents directly to farmers through a subscription program where residents pay farmers early in the year and later receive a monthly or weekly supply of fresh produce in the growing season.

King County Farmland Today

Today, there are 1,790 farms cultivating 49,285 acres of farmland in King County (USDA, 2007). The five APDs now total over 42,000 acres—68 percent of the total farmland with 13,200 acres (21 percent of total) permanently preserved through the County’s Farm Preservation Program. According the 2007 Census of Agriculture, total acres farmed has actually increased since 2002 by 18 percent (41,769 acres). In addition, the market value of production has also risen six percent to \$127,269,000—crops sales account for 36 percent and livestock for 64 percent (USDA, 2007). In fact, King County now ranks 13th in the state in value of production—a jump from 1997’s county ranking of 16th. Census figures demonstrate that the agriculture sector has continually expanded through an increasing number of farms, acres farmed and the value of products sold over the past fifteen years (see Figure 4, Figure 6, and Figure 5).

Figure 4

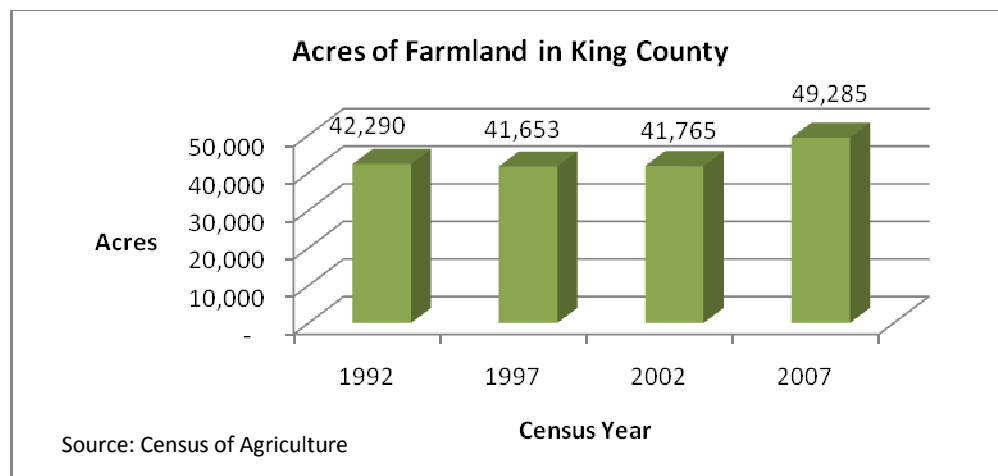


Figure 5

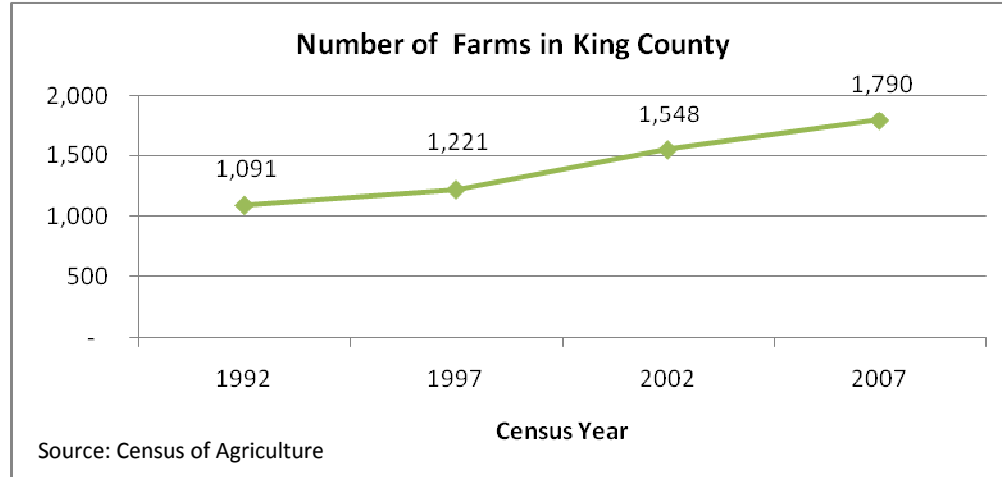
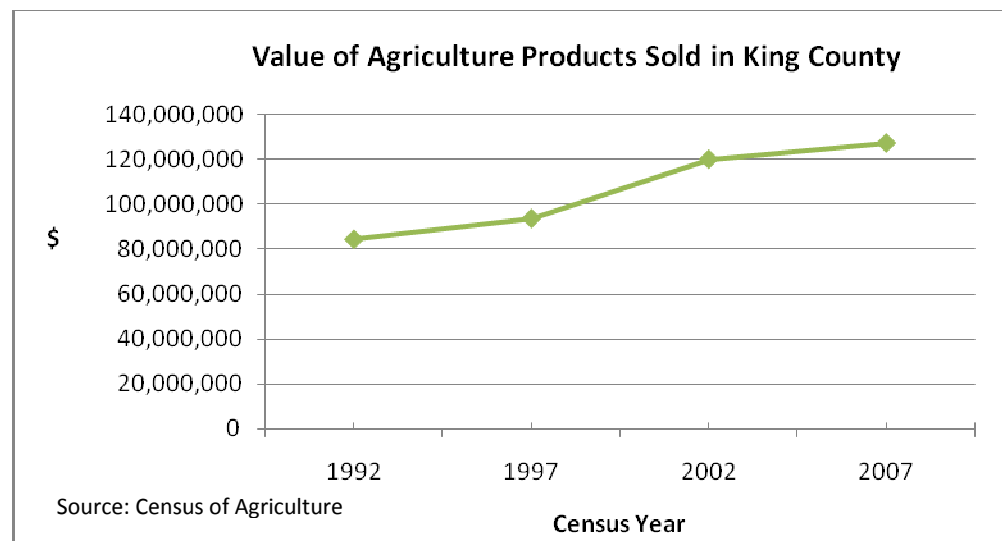


Figure 6



Interestingly, the steady increase of number of farms and acres farmed parallel a spike in the number of farms with lower market values of products sold (i.e. below \$50,000). Meanwhile, as seen in Figure 6, the farms with higher market values (i.e. above \$100,000) dropped during this same time period. The increase of farms with lower market values may be explained by the rise of small-sized farms entering the market sector (see Figure 8). Though this may suggest that larger farms are being subdivided, there has also been an overall increase in the number of acres cultivated (see Figure 4).

Figure 7

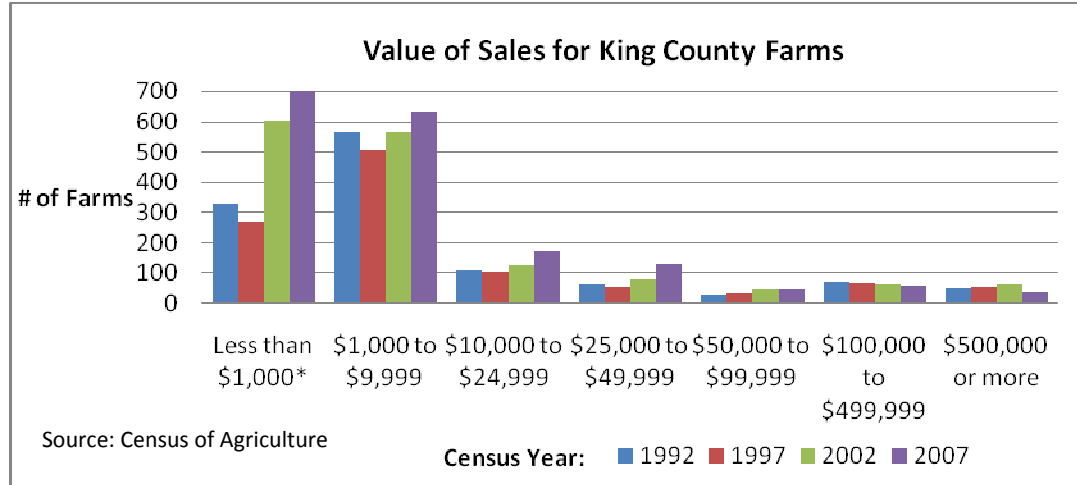
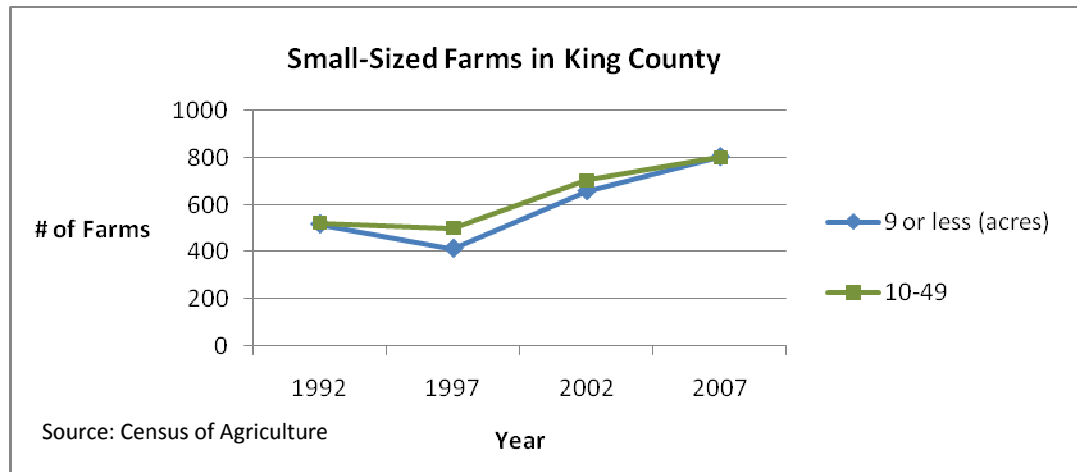


Figure 8



The “new” farmland may be accounted for several reasons such as being previously fallow, cleared forest, or sales being below the Census threshold of \$1,000. While the County has protected farmland through land use tools such as agriculture production districts and purchase of development rights, the urban population’s demand for locally grown foods has provided an impetus for farmers to actually expand their operations. The growing popularity of the local food movement is evident from the increasing number of farmers markets, CSAs, restaurants and grocers purchasing directly from the farmers.⁷

⁷ According to the Puget Sound Fresh’s *2009 Farm Guide*, there are currently 39 farmers market, 29 u-pick farms, and seven CSAs in King County, among other direct marketing opportunities.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In an effort to gain an understanding of the farming community's perceptions regarding the future of farming in King County, a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis was applied. Specifically, content analysis was used to identify themes through a process of interpreting and coding the data (i.e. farmers' comments) and then tabulating frequencies. Prior to this analysis, however, background research was conducted to provide a context of the views and opinions shared by the farming community.

A review was conducted of reports and plans documenting the past and current farmland preservation programming. Informed primarily by government documents, *Chapter 2* provides a background of the County's role in protecting farmland from being converted into nonfarm uses as well as promoting farming activity within the county. Coupled with this historical overview, a profile of today's farming sector is provided through data extracted from the recently released 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture. This background research was critical in familiarizing me with the county agriculture sector in order to effectively interpret and code the survey responses.

In an effort to incorporate the farming community's input into the FARMS report, King County staff and the Agriculture Commission developed two survey methods to collect community feedback: public meetings and a questionnaire. Five public meetings were held through the months of January to April 2009, one in each of the various farm districts of the county. Four meetings were held in a town near one of the five agriculture production districts; a fifth meeting was held on Vashon Island. By conducting the meetings at the district level, farmers were able to attend the meeting in the localities in which they farmed. As a result, the public comments indicated some district-specific concerns and allowed for cross-comparison between the districts. Table 3 shows the meeting location and the number of meeting participants.

Table 3: Meeting Location and Attendance

Meeting Location	APD Represented	Date	# of Participants
Auburn	Upper and Lower Green	February 12 th	27
Carnation	Snoqualmie	January 22 nd	54
Enumclaw	Enumclaw	March 12 th	41
Vashon	Vashon Island*	April 9th	22
Woodinville	Sammamish	January 8th	22

*Vashon Island is not zoned as an APD.

Each meeting was facilitated by an Agriculture Commissioner—this provided the facilitator with familiarity of the attendees as well as the issues. The facilitator led an informal discussion on the challenges farmers face, how they have adapted their farming operations and what resources they needed to continue farming in King County. Facilitators referred to the open-ended survey questions given to each farmer to guide the conversation (see *Appendix B*). During the discussion, county staff wrote down the comments on poster-sized paper for participants to view. Comments were recorded on laptops to capture as many comments as possible.

A questionnaire was created to provide an alternative method of collecting the farmers' input. The questionnaire included two sets of questions. The first set was designed to learn the general characteristics of the survey respondents and their farming operations while allowing for comparison to countywide figures of the recently released 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture data. The second series of questions were open-ended and were designed to learn the issues, emerging trends in farming operations, and needed resources for farming in King County. The survey was distributed to all farmers at the public meetings and was also posted online for those unable to attend the meetings. Similar to the public meetings, the surveys were voluntary and reflect the opinions of individuals who were informed of the *FARMS Report* and had the interest and/or ability to participate.

The survey included five open-ended questions in which this analysis focuses on:

- How is your farm operation changing?
- What kinds of resources or services do you need to be a successful farmer in the future?
- What are the trends you think are important to your operation and your industry?
- What are your plans for your farm property in the future?
- What concerns do you have regarding farming in King County?

Thematic content analysis of the collected feedback was used to identify the farming community's perspectives of farming in King County. This form of analysis allowed me to examine the open-ended survey responses and reduce the extensive amount of information into themes. The coding procedure included breaking down the data into "precisely defined terms" or themes through recognizing key words or phrases, tabulating the frequencies, and noting whether the theme was a discussion topic at the public meetings (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005, 142). Based on this method of interpretation and reduction (Creswell, 1994, 154), the following research design was applied:

- *Step 1:* Each questionnaire was assigned a unique identification number (ID) to provide a tracking system. This allows for repeatability and consistency as the researcher can retrace an identified theme back to the original source of data.
- *Step 2:* A table was created for each of the five open-ended questions on the survey (i.e. questions #14-18). Written responses were then assigned a thematic code according to the content of the response, and the survey's ID was inserted into the table. These responses were then tallied (see *Appendix C*).
- *Step 3:* The survey responses were then categorized into three major themes: (1) challenges and concerns, (2) emerging trends in farming operations and (3) needed resources and services. Each sub-category within these three was given a unique ID,

and the number of survey references was tallied through a new set of tables (see *Appendix D*).

- In order to evaluate the commonalities between the two data sets, I reviewed public meeting notes, and if a topic (i.e. sub-category of three main themes) was discussed it was noted by an “X” as displayed on Table 5, 6 and 7 in *Chapter 4*. Frequencies of public meeting comments were not counted due to the informal structure of the meetings and the difficulty in assessing the significance. For example, a participant may have mentioned an issue which solicited responses from others such as head nods and clapping; however, the issue was not brought up a second time. Therefore, if frequency was used as a measure, this topic would appear to have little prevalence while in reality it was a significant issue.

Figure 9 demonstrates the coding process as outlined above. The appendices include the tables in their entirety as well as all the survey responses collected (see *Appendix C-F*).

Figure 9: Coding Process

Step 1: ID number is entered into table according to theme. See example below:

Question: "How is your farm operation changing?"

Response: "Moving from wholesale to direct marketing" –Survey #5

Step 2: Response themes assigned a "Major Theme Code" and all responses are tallied.

Step 3: Responses from total column for each "Major Theme" are entered into the second table.

Example: Major theme "Cater to Local Market" has 86 survey references.

Step 4: "X" indicates when the major theme was discussed at the public meetings.

Survey #5 (Farmer from Snoqualmie APD)

Step 1

Question#14: How is your farm operation changing?
(77 responses of 88 surveys)

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
13	No changes in farming operation							37	1
	Changes in types of products sold and marketing schemes								
11	Transitioning to direct marketing techniques	5			43			35	3

From the Responses by Survey Question Matrix (Appendix C)

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

				Discussed Public Meeting				
Major Theme Code	Trends/Adaptations	# References by Question		Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
11	Cater to Local Market: Catering to local market demands by diversifying products, using direct marketing, and providing value-added products, organic production, agri-tourism, and educational programming	#14	17					
		#15	0					
		#16	57					
		#17	12	X	X	X	X	X
		#18	0					
		Total:	86					

From the Survey and Meeting Themes Matrix (Appendix D)

King County staff made significant outreach efforts to include a diverse range of farmers throughout the county to collect feedback. Marketing tools included a postcard mailing, online marketing, emails sent to listserves, and personal phone calls (see *Appendix A*). Nonetheless, perceptions of meeting participants and survey respondents may not be entirely representative of the farming community as a whole for several reasons:

- *Environmental conditions:* In early January 2009 the county experienced a record-breaking flood. Due the severe impact flooding had on farmland and their operations, flooding issues were of heightened concern and therefore dominated public meeting discussions and survey responses for several meetings, particularly the Snoqualmie meeting.
- *Scheduling and location constraints:* A single meeting in the evening was held in four APDs and Vashon, which limits the opportunity for some individuals to attend.
- *Not all racial/ethnic/cultural groups represented:* Staff sought participants from a broad range of backgrounds, but this may not include all racial, ethnic or cultural groups in the farming community.⁸
- *Public meetings and the survey were conducted in English:* Language translation may have increased participation by residents who speak languages other than English.
- *Non-farmer meeting participants:* Due to the public nature of the meetings, some meeting participants were not farmers. These individuals shared interests in preserving farmland in King County, and particularly, the local food movement. However, the views are not necessarily similar to those of a farmer. The data collection process noted who made the comments and culled out non-farmer comments. Non-farmer interests and concerns are being addressed elsewhere in the larger *FARMS Report*.

⁸ The County outreached to Hmong farmers and provided translations at the meetings for Hmong meeting participants.

- *Meeting format:* Due to the informal meeting format, some individuals may have been hesitant to speak up and may have needed prompting by a more guided discussion through facilitator following an outlined series of questions.

Despite the limitations, consistent themes emerged from the public meeting discussions and returned questionnaires. Overall, there was little difference between the survey data versus the meeting data. Nearly all the themes identified from the survey analysis, as seen in *Chapter 4*, were discussed in each of the five public meetings. Furthermore, major discussion topics in the public meeting also appeared in the survey analysis. There were many commonalities in the feedback between the districts; that is, most themes are countywide and not APD-specific perspectives. *Chapter 4* provides a summary of the survey results and a brief discussion of each of themes identified.

Chapter 4: Findings

After four months of collecting surveys and conducting the five public meetings, comments regarding the future of farming from the farming community's perspective were compiled. There were a total of 89 surveys—representing 5 percent of 1,790 farms in the county. In addition, nearly 170 farmers attended the public meetings. Overall, survey respondents and meeting participants together represent 14 percent of the county farmers. Through analysis of the data from the surveys and public meetings as detailed in *Chapter 3*, three themes were identified under three main categories: (1) major concerns and challenges, (2) emerging trends or adaptations in the farming industry and (3) needed resources and services for agriculture to remain a viable industry in the county. Prior to discussing these findings, a look at survey respondent profiles is assessed.

Survey Respondents

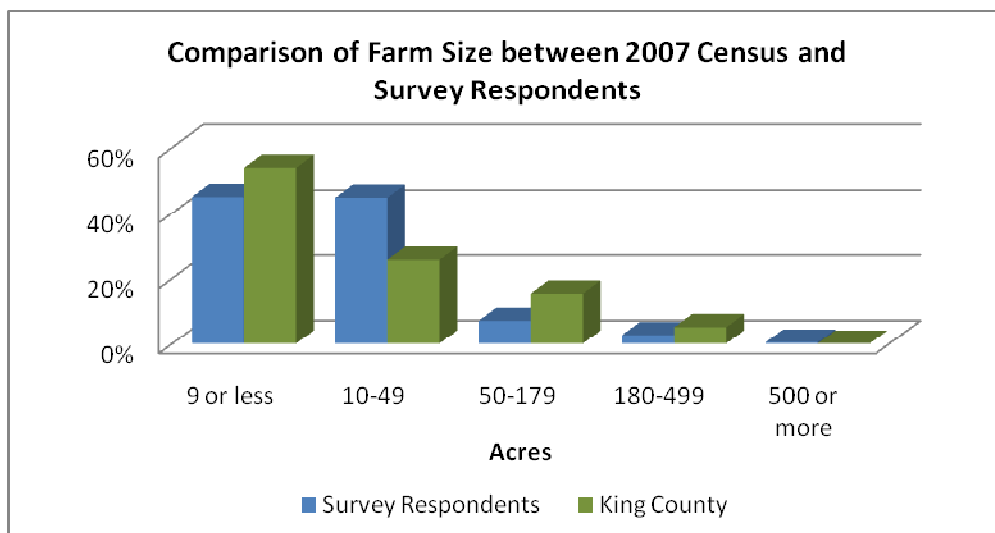
In addition to the open-ended questions, the survey included a series of questions to provide a general profile of the farmer and their farming operations. Utilizing the recent Census of Agriculture 2007 data to design the questions allowed for a comparison of survey respondent characteristics to the Census' countywide figures. As seen in Table 4, there are strong similarities between the survey sample responses and countywide Census figures. For example, farming is the primary occupation for 42 percent of King County farmers—a mere three percent difference from the survey's result of 45 percent. Other similarities include farmer's place of residence and status of land ownership. Minor differences between the sample and Census figures include the size of farms operators represent (see Figure 10).

Table 4: Comparison of 2007 Census King County Figures with Survey Responses

	County	%	Survey	%*
# of Farms	1,790		89	
Farming is primary occupation	753	42%	36	45%
Farm Size (by acres)				
9 or less	802	45%	42	53%
10-49	806	45%	21	27%
50-179	127	7%	12	15%
180-499	48	3%	4	5%
500 or more	7	0.4%	0	0%
Total	1,790	100%	79	100%
Farm Ownership				
Full owner	1,494	83%	55	71%
Part owner	164	9%	6	8%
Tenant	132	7%	17	22%
Total	1,790	100%	78	100%
Residence				
On farm	1,524	85%	57	75%
Off farm	266	15%	19	25%
Total	1,790	100%	76	100%

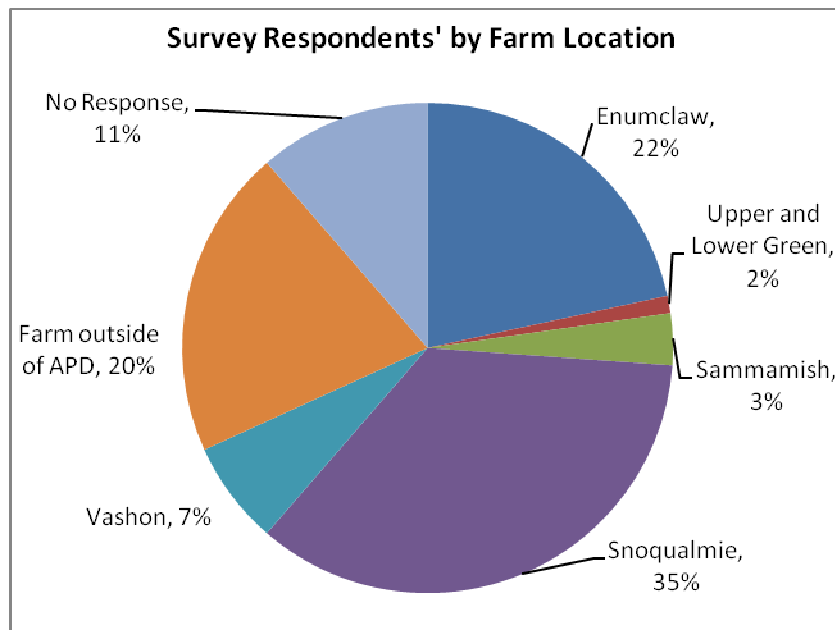
*Based on the number of responses to the survey question, not the total number of surveys.

Figure 10



Based on these general characteristics, the survey respondents' population is relatively reflective of the larger King County population. The Census data is limited to the county, whereas the survey data can be disaggregated by APD. For example, 35 percent of survey results are from Snoqualmie APD farmers (see Figure 11). *Appendix E* and *F* provide all responses to the survey questions. The themes discussed in the following sections are noted as APD-specific or countywide issues. Despite the limitations in the dissemination and collection of the survey (as described in *Chapter 3*), the survey feedback and comments are fairly representative of the King County farming community as whole.

Figure 11



Major Concerns and Challenges

Farmers shared a range of concerns that have a direct impact on their ability to stay in operation. Eight key issues were identified and are largely countywide challenges. Table 5 outlines the main topics followed by a brief description and discussion of each theme. Only three challenges were not discussed at all five public meetings as noted by the shaded boxes in Table 5.

Table 5: Major Challenges Identified by Farmers

Major Concerns/Challenges	# of Survey References	Discussed in Public Meeting				
		Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
Competing Land Uses	39	X	X	X	X	X
Financial Constraints	35	X	X	X	X	X
Flood Impacts	34	X	X		X	
Local Regulatory Constraints	23	X	X	X	X	X
Low Prioritization of Rural Interests	18	X	X	X	X	X
Definition of Agriculture	17	X	X	X	X	
Environmental Protection Regulations	6	X	X	X	X	
Vulnerability of Next Generation Farmers	5	X	X	X	X	X

Competing Land Uses

Despite County efforts to protect farmland, farmers are concerned with the loss of farmland to development and the associated incompatible land uses permissible under the current zoning regulations. In particular, farmers noted large single family houses or “McMansions” convert fertile farmland into permanent non-agricultural uses and are out of character with the rural landscape. Large-tract homes create fragmentation within agricultural areas⁹ and lead to nuisance complaints, localized soil compaction, and increased runoff. The allowance of large-tract homes in agricultural areas pushes up land values, creating financial burdens for those interested in purchasing land or expanding their operations. Closely tied to this issue is the County’s legal definition of agriculture which is addressed as a separate issue later in this report.

“Ultimately, the [development] pressure destroys agriculture and/or people who just want to keep the land whole.” –Enumclaw APD Farmer

⁹ A contiguous land base for agriculture reduces conflicts and discourages non-farm uses and as a result protects the local farming economy (Daniels and Bowers, 1997, 125).

Financial Constraints

According to the surveys and meeting discussions, the financial constraints that reduce the profitability of farming are a countywide issue. Farmers specifically cited the high costs of land, permitting fees, infrastructure, and tax assessments (particularly on agriculture accessory buildings), as significant financial challenges. In

"I am going through a permit nightmare with the County right now, getting a permit to pave 4,000 sq.ft. of existing gravel road. My initial estimate for plan review was over \$22,000. ...That's more to review the plans than the cost to create the plans and pave the road."

particular, farmers are frustrated with the permit fees charged by the County to build—which they uniformly view as excessive. Several farmers provided specific examples to illustrate their point. Compounding these high expenses, farmers find it difficult to obtain loans to purchase land and build infrastructure. Several farmers noted they were forced to work a second job in order to make an adequate living. In fact, farming provides for less than half the income of 49 percent of survey respondents.

Flooding Impacts

In early January 2009 there was record-breaking flooding throughout the county and neighboring areas. As a result, the Sammamish, Snoqualmie and Auburn meetings and the

"Farming in the [Snoqualmie] Valley is really dictated by the flooding." –
Snoqualmie meeting attendee

surveys¹⁰ received during that time period stressed the burdens caused by flooding and the need for relief efforts by the County. In particular, the Snoqualmie meeting was emotionally charged as farmers' properties had been severely impacted, and they had only begun to recover.¹¹

¹⁰ Of the 34 survey references regarding flooding issues, all but four were from Snoqualmie APD farmers.

¹¹ The County's Snoqualmie Flood-Farm Task Force, established several years ago by Motion 12559, held a meeting in late January to deal more directly with flood issues.

Specific flood issues farmers raised were as follows:

- Poor coordination, communication and control of releasing flood waters. King County Flood Warning Center is managed by the County's Office of Emergency Management which coordinates with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Seattle Public Utilities regarding dam operations.
- Increasing development exacerbating flooding conditions through increasing runoff.
- Need for regulatory flexibility regarding the construction of elevated "farm" or "critter pads" recently adopted by Ordinance 15883.
- Production season is shortened for farmers hesitant to grow crops during winter months when the flooding tends to occur. This leads to a decrease in sales and a limitation of what can be grown or raised.

Local Regulatory Constraint

The local zoning ordinance and permitting process was frequently cited as cumbersome and restrictive to the business of farming. Farmers frequently cited that local regulations either

"There are some conditional uses that exist, but the time, permitting fees and requirements often make them unrealistic options." –King County Farmer

prohibit or limit their ability to build and use structures for activities directly impacting the economic feasibility of their farming operations. Farmers expressed frustration with the permitting process or as one participant called it, the "permitting quagmire" as well as specific regulations. Issues include:

- Lengthy and costly permitting process that is difficult to navigate
- Unable to legally build structures to support farming operations. Processing facilities, office space in agriculture accessory buildings, and housing for farmer workers were cited as examples.
- Restrictions on building materials allowed (this is particularly an issue for Vashon farmers)

Several farmers noted that the inflexibility of land use regulations impedes their ability to change and adapt their operations to meet market demands.

Low Prioritization of Rural Interests

Farmers expressed concern that rural interests are a low priority for the County and its residents.

Farmers asserted there is poor understanding of farming needs, which is evident through some of the challenges in the permitting processes and the

“[County] budget and staffing are overwhelmingly dominated by urban/environmental concerns to the detriment of the rural/agricultural population and economy.” –Lower Green APD Farmer

allowable and prohibited uses in the APDs. Furthermore, farmers specifically fear the loss of King County Ag Programs and staff that provide valuable technical and educational support. Several farmers noted the County needed to improve urban-rural relations as well as raise the urban population’s awareness and support of local farming.

Definition of Agriculture

The most controversial issue *within* the farming community is the legal definition of agriculture; that is, what land uses are labeled as “agriculture” by the County and therefore receive the incentives designed to protect farming (i.e. differential tax incentives based on current use and reduced regulations regarding the critical

“Keep farmland for people food, not for equestrian estates which take away farmland and drive up land prices.” –King County Farmer

“I am concerned that the do-gooders who don't own horses are going to try to change our way of life out here in the country, by changing horses from livestock to ‘pet.’ Which in turn will change our tax status from agricultural to residential.” –Enumclaw APD Farmer

area ordinance). The point of contention is the inclusion of equestrian uses within the definition. Those opposed to equestrian uses being included in the definition assert that horse farms or “hobby farms” drive up land prices and reduce the amount of farmland available. Sno-Valley Tilth released public testimony in March 2009 on “The Future of Farming in King County.” The testimony suggests that the definition of agriculture within the APDs be based on activities that relate to the commercial production of food and forage for human consumption or commercial production of fiber products. Farmers supporting

the inclusion of equestrian uses assert that raising horses are a type of farming and provide source of income for those individuals. Currently, there is no legal definition of agriculture at either the county or state level.

Environmental Protection Regulations

Another contentious issue is the impact of environmental protection regulations. Though there were only six survey references highlighting this issue, the public meeting discussions

“Increasing environmental/ESA burden on agriculture can kill agriculture in this county.” –Lower Green APD Farmer

demonstrated that this was a larger issue, particularly for areas with salmon-bearing streams that lead to Endangered Species Act (ESA) restrictions. Some farmers stressed that complying with regulations is in direct conflict with farming operations. Farmers asserted that environmental regulations reduce access on their land, create drainage issues and limit their operations’ profitability. While some farmers had strong views that they were being over-regulated, others contended that there should be more of a “balanced” treatment in which environmental interests should not be favored over farm interests.

Vulnerability of Next Generation Farmers

Farmers voiced considerable concern for the next generation of farmers to feasibly enter the industry due to the many financial constraints. They repeatedly cited that today’s farmers are nearing retirement¹² and that high costs of farming will likely prevent potential new farmers from entering the industry.

Additionally, farmers noted the need for technical and education assistance for new farmers. The meeting discussions revealed that many farmers are unaware of local programs, such as FarmLink, working to address these issues.

“We are not encouraging people of all ages to get into the agri-business industry. I am also concerned that there are not enough educational opportunities locally for those who are interested in farming.” –King County Farmer

¹² According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, the average age of farm operators in King County is 55 years old.

Emerging Trends and Adaptations

Due to a culmination of economic, environmental and regulatory factors, King County farmers have adapted their operations in order to stay in the business of farming. Through the survey questions and meeting discussions pertaining to farmers' current farming practices and future plans for their properties, four countywide trends emerged from the analysis. All of the trends identified were discussed in each of the public meetings (see Table 6).

Table 6: Operation Trends Identified by Farmers

Trends/Adaptations	# of Survey References	Discussed in Public Meeting				
		Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
Cater to Local Market	86	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to Farm	44	X	X	X	X	X
Increase Capacity	42	X	X	X	X	X
Change of Farming Methods	25	X	X	X	X	X

Cater to Local Market

Farmers repeatedly cited that their operations were tailored to respond to local market demands, particularly for the urban population. Farmers have adopted a range of strategies which include:

- Selling products through direct marketing opportunities such as farmers markets, farm stands and internet sales¹³
- Providing value-added products, such as preserved and dried goods
- Growing organically-grown produce and/or high-value products

"The practical thing to do is to provide for our own local economy." –
Snoqualmie Farmer meeting attendee

¹³ 34 percent of survey respondents sell products at farmers markets and 24 percent at farm stands. See Appendix F for complete survey results.

- Creating agri-tourism and educational opportunities for customers (i.e. hayrides, corn mazes, classes, special event space, etc.) on farm property

The growing popularity of the local food movement is evident from the increasing number of farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSAs), restaurants and grocers purchasing directly from the farmers and other direct marketing opportunities. According to the Puget Sound Fresh's *2009 Farm Guide*, there are currently 39 farmers market, 29 u-pick farms, and seven CSAs in King County, among other direct marketing opportunities. These approaches are similar to other agriculture areas in metropolitan areas throughout the country. This is evident by the increasing number of farmers markets¹⁴ and federal government support through USDA programs such as Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMGP) and Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).

Continue to Farm

Despite the financial and regulatory challenges they confront, the farmers frequently expressed their determination and commitment to remain in the business of farming. When asked of their future plans, farmers not only discussed their plans for farming practices and types of product to be grown or raised but also the property itself. Several emphasized their desire for their property to remain under agriculture uses and not be developed by the next generation and/or future property owners. While some farmers are preparing to keep the property in the family, other farmers are interested in leasing their properties to potential new farmers. However, it is worth noting that four respondents shared they are strongly considering moving their farm operations outside of King County due to financial and regulatory constraints.

"The current plan is to transfer farm ownership to my daughter and son in law. They both currently work on the farm part-time and have a strong desire to continue the family tradition. They would be the fourth generation to farm this property." –Snoqualmie APD Farmer

Increase Capacity

¹⁴ Today there are 4,685 farmers markets in the U.S., a nearly 270% increase from 1994 (USDA, 2008).

Farmers' commitment to staying in the business was emphasized by numerous survey references and meeting comments regarding their plans to expand their operating capacity. Several common schemes have been adopted by farmers to essentially increase the volume of sales. They include:

- Increasing amount of acres cultivated on existing property or through purchasing more land
- Improving or building infrastructure on property such as housing, barns, critter pads, wells and greenhouses
- Developing agri-tourism and educational opportunities on the farm
- Providing value-added products through on-site processing facilities

"We want to expand into other u-pick small fruits and crops and require 2 greenhouses to do salad greens and tomatoes. We want to go from part-time to full-time within the next 5-6 years." – Lower Green APD farmer

Change of Farming Methods

In addition to expanding their capacity, farmers are also altering their farming methods and practices. Influenced by rising public concerns of climate change impacts, use of synthetic pesticides and herbicides, and food safety issues, farmers noted there is stronger demand for

"[I] have gone from traditional farming and the use of synthetic fertilizers & pesticides/herbicides to organic methods, including crop rotation, winter cover crops, natural pesticides, etc." – King County Farmer

organic and locally grown products. Some of the newer methods mentioned include small-intensive farming, permaculture, biodynamic and diversifying crops grown. As seen in *Appendix F*, the survey results demonstrate more environmentally sustainable practices are in currently in use. Fifty percent of respondents use non-certified organic practices,¹⁵ 47 percent use natural fertilizers and 65 percent use cover crops.

¹⁵ USDA accredits "certifying agents" to certify that organic production and handling practices meet the national standards (www.ams.usda.gov). Farmers using organic methods are not necessarily required (or desire) to receive accreditation.

Needed Resources and Services

Though King County farmers have shown resilience by accommodating their operations to meet the market demands and comply with the multiple layers of regulations from the local to federal level, the farmers' comments repeatedly expressed a continued need for farmland preservation programs at the local level to protect farmland from development pressures. They additionally called for measures that promote farming as a business. The call for resources and services are a paralleled response to the challenges outlined earlier in this chapter. The major resources and services identified in the surveys were discussed in each of the public meetings (see Table 6).

Table 7: Needs Identified by Farmers

Needed Resources & Services	# of Survey References	Discussed in Public Meeting				
		Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
Regulatory Flexibility & Efficiency	54	X	X	X	X	X
Prioritization of Rural Interests	52	X	X	X	X	X
Financial Assistance	26	X	X	X	X	X

Regulatory Flexibility & Efficiency

To overcome regulatory constraints, farmers called for improved regulatory flexibility of allowable land uses and the overall efficiency of the permitting process. Farmers cited the following needs from the County:

- Adapt land use codes to be more sensitive to and supportive of farming operations
- Improve permitting system's efficiency by shortening the length of the process and providing permit assistance
- Provide assistance and user-friendly materials to navigate the regulatory system and understand the role of various agencies involved (i.e. DDES, Public Health, etc.)

"[Farmers need] More support from County and State regulators making it clear that farming is a valuable pursuit in this area." –Snoqualmie APD Farmer

Of the total 54 survey references, 12 references specifically requested improving the permit system and seven cited allowing flexibility in farm worker housing. Both needs were also specifically brought up in public meeting discussions.

Prioritization of Rural Interests

In addition to regulatory and financial relief, farmers also offered four general areas in which the County can support the local farming industry and thereby prioritize rural interests. They include:

- Technical assistance and educational resources provided by the County's agriculture programming and staff. Specifically, farmers requested services for supporting potential new farmers.

"[County needs] simplified permitting to allow a farmer to take quick advantage of extra time and money that may not be there by the time permit is issued. Lower permit fees, increased site specific flexibility and much better communication and competency from permitting agency." –King County Farmer

- Infrastructure supporting farming operations such as: drainage assistance and maintenance,¹⁶ recycling program for plastic and twine from straw bales, disposal for dead livestock, feed stores, and processing facilities.
- Promotion of local farms through public awareness and education efforts and expanding direct marketing opportunities.

Financial Assistance

Farmers provided examples of financial assistance that would improve the economic feasibility of farming in King County. They include:

- Lower permit fees
- Tax incentives or re-evaluation of land value assessments to lower taxes (several farmers note the difficulty in building agriculture accessory buildings due to high taxes associated with this type of development)
- Cost-share programming for infrastructure (i.e. building and equipment) improvements
- Promotion of institutions to purchase from producers in the county
- Loan assistance to purchase land, equipment and build infrastructure such as barns.

The challenges, industry trends and needed resources and services described in this chapter are based on the opinions of King County farmers who participated in outreach process. Though the survey and public meeting formats were framed to gain insight of the farmers' perceptions of their future in farming, the findings largely focus on current and ongoing issues that are often viewed as hurdles to their ability to farm in the future. The following section compares and contrasts the themes identified at the APD level as well as to other relevant research to provide further context of the findings.

¹⁶ Though there were only five survey references, drainage maintenance was a significant need according to the public meeting discussions.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In response to King County's concern about the future of farming in the County, the Agriculture Commission and County staff sought input from the farming community on the present conditions and challenges of the agriculture industry. The themes identified herein reflect the perceptions of farmers through the compilation of comments from nearly 90 surveys, and input from over 170 public meeting participants were categorized into three areas: (1) major challenges farmers confront, (2) trends in farming and (3) needed resources and services to keep farming viable in the county. Due to the diverse nature of the King County farming community, there were at times conflicting views amongst the farmers themselves. While there was wide agreement across the county on the identified themes, these findings also suggest there are some issues that are more significant to particular APDs and are not necessarily countywide problems. Recognizing that many of the issues are similar among the APDs, farmer input indicates that there should be flexibility in the regulations to meet the unique needs of each APD. The following are several examples of issues, highlighted through the feedback, for which the County could address individual APDs:

- Snoqualmie APD: many farmers expressed interest in defining agriculture as commercial production of food and forage for human consumption or commercial production of fiber products. The public testimony of the Sno-Valley Tilth specifically addresses this issue.
- Snoqualmie APD and Enumclaw APD: the unique flooding conditions--prevalence of flooding, the release of flood waters, and control of development within the riparian zone--call for a "flood plan" to address the complexities of this issue as it involves other government entities such as the Army of Engineer Corps and FEMA.
- Vashon Island: nearly all of the farms on Vashon Island are less than five acres, which impacts not only how they operate but the size and type of infrastructure required. County standardization of agriculture accessory buildings does not meet their specific needs and are cost-prohibitive.

Many of the themes identified in this report are not necessarily unique or new to King County farmers. By drawing comparisons between two reports, King County's *Forest and Farms Report* (1996) and Washington State's *The Future of Farming: Strategic Plan for Washington Agriculture 2020 and Beyond* (2009), it is evident that many challenges are longstanding in the County and are also statewide concerns. These two reports were driven by a community participant process to identify critical challenges and potential strategies through farmers' input. The *Forest and Farms Report* outlines six barriers through King County farmers input and provides twenty-seven strategies based on "the understanding that the community of farmers in King County is extremely diverse" (p. 5-1). The recently released State's *Future of Farming* report offers recommendations for five key areas focused on "increasing understanding among state policymakers and call for proactive policies to reinforce agriculture's socio-economic role" (p. 9). As demonstrated in Table 8, the various strategies and recommendations these reports developed are addressing similar concerns to those raised by farmers in this report.

Table 8: Common Characteristics of Report Findings

FARMS Major Concerns/Challenges	<i>Forest and Farms</i> Report Strategies (1996)	<i>Future of Farming</i> Recommendations (2009)
Competing Land Uses	X	X
Financial Constraints	X	X
Impacts of Flooding		
Local Regulatory Constraints	X	X
Low Prioritization of Agriculture	X	X
Definition of Agriculture		
Environmental Protection Regulations	X	X
Vulnerability of Next Generation Farmers	X	X

In this limited comparative analysis of the reports, there are several characteristics that stand out and are worth considering as the County determines its next steps to addressing these issues. They are:

- All six “burdens” from the County’s previous efforts in evaluating the agriculture sector were major issues in this report as well. *The Forest and Farms Report* challenges include: “(I) high cost of land, (II) the low [profitability] of farming, (III) insufficient level of technical support available to local farmers, (IV) need for better marketing and promotion, (V) regulatory requirements and (VI) population growth and conflicts with farmers.”
- All five key areas of the State’s report were identified as major themes within this report. They include: “(1) make agriculture a priority, (2) eliminate regulatory barriers, (3) protect resources, (4) strengthen support services and (5) harness emerging opportunities” (i.e. local market demand).
- Neither report specifically addressed the impacts of flooding. This suggests that the conditions of flooding, partly exacerbated by surrounding development, are not as prominent an issue for the majority of Washington counties (most of which are rural). Furthermore, *Forest and Farms* not addressing flooding issues indicates this is a temporal issue. This study was conducted during a time of record-breaking flooding which directly impacted the input received. If the meetings and survey had been conducted in the summer or year of no flooding, it may have not been identified as a major issue.
- Neither report discusses the issue of the legal definition of agriculture. This concern may be of a more recent nature as land values have risen and competition for farmland has increased in the metropolitan area.
- Though the State’s report addressed financial constraints such as ensuring long-term and short-term credit for farmers, the feedback from King County farmers demonstrates that some of the financial burdens are unique to King County. First, farmers stressed the high land values due the proximity to urban areas and

development pressures. Second, permit fees make it cost-prohibitive for farmers to build the necessary infrastructure for their operations.

The challenges, industry trends and needed resources identified in this report are not intended to be inclusive, nor did the comprehensive four-month, on-the-ground methodology seek consensus. This report, based on the farmers' perspectives, offers an opportunity to expand discussion, debate, and further develop priorities and strategies to address the County's agriculture sector's needs and interests. The input of farmers is invaluable as the County plans for the future of farming in King County.

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Appendix A: Outreach Postcard



Front of outreach postcard (Source: King County's DNRP)

The King County Agriculture Commission
invites your ideas for the **FARMS** Study

Future of **A**griculture: **R**ealize **M**eaningful **S**olutions

You are invited to attend any of these meetings

Jan. 8, 2009 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
**Carol Edwards Center,
Madrona Room**
17401 - 133rd Ave NE, Woodinville

Feb. 12, 2009 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
**Auburn City Hall Council
Chambers (1st floor)**
25 West Main St, Auburn

Jan. 22, 2009 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
**Carnation Elementary
Multi Purpose Room**
4950 Tolt Ave, Carnation

Mar. 12, 2009 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Enumclaw High School - Commons
226 Semanski St S, Enumclaw

For more information and other ways to share your ideas

For questions contact

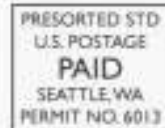
Steve Evans
206-296-7824
steve.evans@kingcounty.gov

If you would like to offer your ideas
online, please visit

www.kingcounty.gov/wlr



Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Water and Land Resources Division
203 S. Jackson Street, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98104




Alternative formats available.
Please call 206-296-6519
or TTY: 711

0810farmaPCARDjedd wgab

Back of outreach postcard

Appendix B: Survey

Date: _____

**King County**
201 S Jackson, Suite 600
Seattle WA 98104
Steve.evans@kingcounty.gov (206) 296-7824

Future of Agriculture, Realize Meaningful Solutions (FARMS) Survey

Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey for the King County Agriculture Commission. Survey responses and tonight's discussion will help inform the Commission's FARMS Report. The report will include recommendations for preserving farmland and promoting farming viability as requested by the King County Council in Ordinance 16172. Please return the survey tonight or mail to: Steve Evans, King County, Suite 600, 201 S Jackson St, Seattle, WA 98104. Thank you for your valuable input!

1. Do you farm or live in an agriculture production district (APD)? ☐ Yes ☐ No (Please share your zip code: _____)
2. If so, which one? ☐ Enumclaw ☐ Upper Green ☐ Lower Green ☐ Sammamish ☐ Snoqualmie
3. Are you actively farming? (If no, please skip to #15)
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not now, but I plan to in future. Please specify when: _____ years.
4. Is farming your primary occupation (more than 50% income)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. How many years have you been farming? ☐ 2 or less ☐ 3-4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10 or more
6. Do you own or rent your farmland? ☐ Full ownership ☐ Part-ownership ☐ Rent
7. Where is your place of residence? ☐ On the farm ☐ Off the farm
8. What is the size of the farm (total acres)?
☐ Less than 5 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10-49 ☐ 50-179 ☐ 180-499 ☐ 500 or more
9. Three major public agencies provide services and assistance to farmers in the county. What services have you used? (check all that apply)
☐ Classes/Training ☐ Floodplain Management ☐ Puget Sound Fresh (marketing)
☐ Drainage Assistance ☐ Livestock Management ☐ Transfer of Development Rights Program
☐ Farm Plan ☐ Permit Assistance ☐ Other _____
10. What service providers have you used? (check all that apply)
☐ King County Agriculture ☐ Washington State University (WSU) King County Extension ☐ Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
☐ King Conservation District (KCD) ☐ Farm Service Agency (FSA) ☐ Other _____
11. What agricultural practices do you use? (check all that apply)
☐ Certified organic ☐ Natural fertilizers ☐ Organically approved pesticides/herbicides
☐ Organic but not certified ☐ Synthetic fertilizers ☐ Synthetic pesticides/herbicides
☐ Cover crops ☐ Genetically modified seeds ☐ Other _____
12. How do you sell your farm products? (check all that apply)
☐ Auction ☐ Farmers Market ☐ Institutions (i.e. schools) ☐ U-Pick
☐ Brokerage ☐ Farmstand ☐ Inter-farm sales ☐ Wholesaler
☐ CSA ☐ Grocers ☐ Restaurants ☐ Other _____

Front page of survey (questions #1-12)

13. What do you grow or raise?

14. How is your farm operation changing?

15. What kinds of resources or services do you need to be a successful farmer in the future? *(If you are not currently a farmer, please let us know what you would need to become one.)*

16. What are the trends you think are important to your operation and your industry?

17. What are your plans for your farm property in the future? *(If you would like to lease your property to a farmer, please let us know how we can contact you.)*

18. What concerns do you have regarding farming in King County?

19. If you do not farm, please share your interests in the future of farming in King County?

Backside of survey (questions #13-19)

Appendix C: Responses by Survey Question

The following tables categorize the survey responses for each of the five open-ended survey questions (i.e. #14-18). Any categories that are in quotation marks reflect exactly what was written on the survey with no further explanation provided. The numbers farming districts (i.e. Snoqualmie) columns represent the unique ID number assigned to each survey and where the respondent farms. The “total” column is a count of the responses. The numerical code in the left column represents the major theme the response theme is assigned. The tally of each theme is then transferred to the Survey Themes Matrix (Appendix D). Themes with less than two responses were generally not assigned a code.

Question#14: How is your farm operation changing?

(77 responses of 89 surveys)

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							Total
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	
13	No changes in farming operation							37	1
11	Transitioning to direct marketing techniques	5			43			35	3
11	Catering to local market demands, diversifying products, focusing on high-value products and providing value-added products (this includes organic production)	7, 14, 15, 51, 73, 76,		63		41, 62	97	32, 58, 83	13
11	Developing “farm experience” opportunities (i.e. educational programming, hands-on activities, “ag-tourism”)							32	1
22	Change of agriculture practices/methods (i.e. conventional to organic)	74, 90		49			92, 97	36, 50, 69, 87, 98	10
12	Increasing capacity (includes increasing amount of land cultivated and adding or improving existing infrastructure). Several respondents cite this is in effort to meet local market demands.	6, 12, 16, 40, 51, 74, 80, 85, 96	72	54, 57, 65, 81	43, 78		23, 48, 94	34, 46, 94	22
2	Development pressures or “urbanization”	21, 26		22, 55,					5

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
				66					
1	Difficulties caused by flooding (sediment dumping, erosion, shortening of season, increased expenses, drainage issues)	2, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 21, 40, 80							11
	Shortening of market season or reducing amount produced(due to flooding, limited acreage available or low profit)	11, 14, 15		61	53				5
4	Increasing regulatory issues (i.e. farming near shoreline and rivers)	4, 76, 96		67		60			5
3	Financial constraints: Operation becoming less profitable due to low market prices of product being sold and high expenses (land, equipment, taxes, permit fees, etc.)	13 Flood related- 11, 17, 21, 99		20, 22, 55, 56	78			31, 70	11
	Difficult to find farm labor			30				71	2
	County focus on needs of small crop farmers over large scale operation needs (i.e. dairies)			55, 56					2
	"Becoming more profitable each year"						93		1

Question #15: What kinds of resources or services do you need to be a successful farmer in the future?

(71 responses of 88 surveys)

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
15	More efficient and simpler permitting process (Several specifically cited assistance throughout the process).	3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11		30, 54				32, 69, 84	12

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
15	Regulatory flexibility and consistency in the uses and structures permitted to aid farming operations	6, 7, 20, 21, 38, 74, 76, 90, 95, 96		54, 67			23	24, 34, 36, 84	17
15	Regulatory flexibility for water access through wells and irrigations	12, 38, 16						32, 52	5
6	Address farm worker housing issue	10, 12, 76						34, 36	5
16	Financial assistance (cost-share, incentives, lower taxes and permit fees, etc.) to improve affordability of land, equipment and building	3, 10, 11, 51, 76, 96		22, 30	43, 78		23, 48, 92	32, 35, 36, 50, 70, 71, 87, 97	20
16-NR*	Lower taxes			22				50, 97	3
16-NR	Lower permit fees	3, 10, 11		30			23	32	6
16-NR	Improving land value assessments to more adequately favor farming	76						36	2
16	Local government and institutions purchasing locally			61			93		2
23	Drainage assistance and ditch maintenance	7, 8	72		42	60	23		6
	Access to "more land"	20, 45						28, 50, 71	5
1	Relief from the impact of flooding (This includes addressing run-off caused by upstream development.)	5, 7, 8, 10, 11 12, 17, 38			42	62			10
2	Control of development around and in APDs	11, 16		55	42				4
21	Infrastructure supporting farming operations (i.e. feed stores, processing capabilities, disposal for dead animals, bale plastic/twine recycling)	85		55	53, 56	60			5

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
18	Technical, scientific, and educational support and education from King County and other agencies (some responses noted “continued” support). Specific examples included education for new farmers, efforts being regionally sensitive and developing/implementing farm plans).	7, 40, 51, 74, 80		49	41, 43, 53		92, 94	26, 32, 35, 37, 50, 75, 97	17
17	County prioritize rural interests. This includes the promotion/marketing of local farming, public awareness of farming.	5, 13, 95		55	53			26, 34, 58	8
7	Inclusion and support of horse interests in agriculture programming							29, 70	2
	“Legal productive workers”							32	1
7	Opposition to horse interests in agriculture	90							1
	Eliminate “wasteful government spending”			79					1
	Improve Federal subsidies- subsidize all farmers	99							1

Question #16: What are the trends you think are important to your operation and your industry?

(70 responses of 89 surveys)

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
11	Demand of local food movement	2, 3, 7, 13, 14, 15, 21, 38, 51,		30, 56	43, 45, 53, 41,		23, 48	24, 28, 35, 36, 37, 58, 71, 75	29

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
		74, 76, 96			78				
11	Organic produce demands	2, 7, 51, 74, 95			45, 53, 78		48, 93	24, 31	12
11	Demand of slow food movement	2			43			35	3
11	Direct marketing (farmers markets, online sale, U-pick, farmstands)	5		67	53	62	23, 93	24, 58	8
11	Value-added opportunities, including agri-tourism	7, 51						37	3
11	Food-safety	2, 14							2
	<i>Farming operations and practices</i>								
22	"Sustainable farming" practices (i.e. livestock management and farm plans)	90, 95		82				50, 98	5
22	Small, intensive farming due to fragmentation caused by development and market demand	5, 16						24, 34	4
21	Infrastructure supporting farming operations (feed stores, processing capabilities, etc.). Respondents noted current decline.				53			32	2
	Difficult to find farm labor					60			1
4	Less restrictions on critter pads	8, 16							2
5	Restrictions of environmental protection regulations			54					1
15	Regulatory flexibility in the uses and structures permitted to aid farming operations and improve efficiency of permitting process	4, 8, 16, 17, 38, 96	72	54, 81	53		97	32, 34	13
6	Flexible farm worker housing	8, 16							2
16	Financial support for institutions to purchase locally	6, 10						50	3
1	Develop a plan to address frequent flooding	10							1

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
17	Improving urban-rural relations and collaboration (planning w/ community to protect farmland)	7, 10, 21						50	4
18	Education/assistance for new farmers	21					92	50	3
14	Promotion of local farming and public awareness of farming (i.e. Puget Sound Fresh)	40, 51, 76, 80	89	61	43			50	8
16	"Keep Ag subsidies"			61					1
2	Increasing development and need for protection of farmland	11		81				34	3
1	Frequent flooding	8, 11, 21							3
3	Financial constraints: Operation becoming less profitable due to low market prices of product being sold and high expenses (land, equipment, taxes, permit fees)	99		56	53			31	4
7	Inclusion and support of horse interests in agriculture			49				29, 70	3
	"Responsible breeding- rescue"			64					1
7	Agriculture uses should be defined as "food for people"- not equestrian uses							75, 87	2

Question #17: What are your plans for your farm property in the future?

(73 responses of 89 surveys)

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
13	Continue to farm	2, 6, 7, 17, 40, 74, 80, 90, 99		54, 55, 64, 65, 67, 79, 81, 82	78	62	48, 93	24, 28, 50, 52, 58, 69, 87	28
11	Cater to local demands, diversify products, focus on high-value products, provide value-added products and provide agri-tourism activities	2, 38			43, 53, 78			32, 58	7
11	Provide educational programming for public as well as training for future farmers	10			78		23	35, 50	5
22	Stay informed on new and improved practices	74				62		50	3
22	Conservation practices	4							1
12	On-site processing	5			43				2
12	Expanding operations through new activities or new cultivation	8, 12, 13, 16, 38		30	43, 49			29, 35	10
12	Build or improve infrastructure on farm	11, 16		20, 30	43, 45		23	71	8
13	Lease or purchase property	38		22		60		24, 75, 84	6
13	Move residence to farm	16							1
	Keep property as whole piece			22					1
	Move operation outside of King County	96						34, 37, 84	4
13	Prepare for next generation farming the land by partnering with others or with family members	15, 51		65	41, 42, 53			28, 36	8
1	Dependent on flooding and drainage issues	21, 95						32	3

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
3	Dependent on economy and available resources	21			56				2
4	Dependent on regulatory restrictions and financial costs associated	96			54			32	4
	Reducing operations until market improves							70	1
22	Intensive small scale farming						92, 94		2

Question #18: What concerns do you have regarding farming in King County?
(67 responses of 89 surveys)

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
	No concerns			56	45				2
1	Development increasing runoff and flooding (including drainage issues)	3, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 16, 73						69	9
	"Lack of land"			20					1
	"Water"	26							1
7	<i>Definition of agriculture</i>	3, 40, 76, 90	89	49, 82				29, 87	9
7-NR	Opposition to horse interests in agriculture	3, 76, 90						87	4
7-NR	Inclusion and support of horse interests in agriculture			49, 82				29	3
2	Competition from non-farm uses of land- specific concerns include "McMansion" homes being built, minimal restrictions on incompatible land uses, rising land prices, need to protect farmland	2, 5, 6, 7, 11, 26, 40, 74, 85, 90	72	22, 59, 68, 79	42, 78	60, 62	97	18, 24, 50, 70, 71, 75, 83	27

Major Theme Code	Response Themes	Survey Responses							
		Snoqualmie	Sammamish	Enumclaw	Lower Green	Upper Green	Vashon	NA	Total
4	Land use regulations and permitting process being too restrictive and inflexible	2, 21		22, 30, 64	43		23, 94	24	9
4	Inconsistency in permitting process	3, 7, 90							3
5	Restrictions of environmental protection regulations	5, 8, 17		54	53				5
1	Impact of flooding	5, 6, 10, 15, 16, 21		54		62			8
3	Financial constraints (paying full price for infrastructure, permit fees, taxes, etc.)	7, 10, 11, 14, 21, 74, 96		20, 22, 30, 55, 59, 64	41, 43		92	24, 98	18
24	Lack of farmers- need for new generation of farmers	3, 14, 73					97	50	5
21	Loss of infrastructure supporting farming (i.e. feed stores, supplies and equipment purchase/repair)	5						71	2
9	Lack of government support	16, 21					23		3
9	Poor understanding by urban or government of farming needs. Need for promotion of local farming and public awareness of farming	17, 95, 99		22, 56, 79, 81	43, 53			83	10
9	Loss of support and programming from King County and other agencies	5, 21, 51, 80			55				5
	"Resist livestock registry"						48		1
	Quality animal feed and the high costs			59					1
17	Expansion of farmers markets						93		1

Appendix D: Survey and Meeting Themes Matrix

Major Concerns and Challenges

Major Theme Code	Concerns/Challenges	# References by Question		Discussed at Public Meeting				
				Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
2	Competing Land Uses: Development pressure from non-farm land uses. Concerns include: "McMansion" homes being built, minimal restrictions on incompatible land uses, rising land prices	#14	5	X	X	X	X	
		#15	4					
		#16	3					
		#17	0					
		#18	27					
		Total:	39					
3	Financial Constraints: Paying high prices for infrastructure, permit fees, taxes, etc.). In addition, operations are becoming less profitable due to low market prices of product being sold and high expenses.	#14	11	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	4					
		#17	2					
		#18	18					
		Total:	35					
1	Impact of Flooding: Issues include sediment dumping, erosion, shortening of season, increased expenses, and drainage issues	#14	11	X	X		X	
		#15	0					
		#16	3					
		#17	3					
		#18	17					
		Total:	34					
4	Local Regulatory Constraints: Zoning, permitting process and other local land use regulations are too restrictive and inflexible	#14	5	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	2					
		#17	4					
		#18	12					
		Total:	23					

Major Theme Code	Concerns/Challenges	# References by Question		Discussed at Public Meeting				
				Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
9	Low Prioritization of Rural Interests: Poor understanding by urban or government of farming needs. Lack of government support. Need for promotion of local farming and public awareness of farming.	#14	0	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	0					
		#17	0					
		#18	18					
		Total:	18					
7	Definition of Agriculture: A legal definition of what uses should be considered a farming land use or activity	#14	0	X	X	X	X	
		#15	3					
		#16	5					
		#17	0					
		#18	9					
		Total:	17					
5	Environmental Protection Regulations: ESA regulations impact on ability to farm.	#14	0	X	X	X	X	
		#15	0					
		#16	1					
		#17	0					
		#18	5					
		Total:	6					
24	New Farmers: Concern of technical and financial support for new potential farmers	#14	0	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	0					
		#17	0					
		#18	5					
		Total:	5					

Emerging Industry Trends and Adaptations

Major Theme Code	Trends/Adaptations	# References by Question		Discussed at Public Meeting				
				Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
11	Cater to Local Market: Catering to local market demands by diversifying products, using direct marketing, and providing value-added products, organic production, agri-tourism, and educational programming	#14	17	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	57					
		#17	12					
		#18	0					
		Total:	86					
13	Continue to Farm: this includes thinking of next generation that will continue to farm their land	#14	1	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	0					
		#17	43					
		#18	0					
		Total:	44					
12	Increase Capacity: increasing amount of land cultivated and adding or improving existing infrastructure).	#14	22	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	0					
		#17	20					
		#18	0					
		Total:	42					
22	Change of Farming Methods: to include more sustainable and conservation techniques (including diversifying product and small-scale intensive)	#14	10	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	9					
		#17	6					
		#18	0					
		Total:	25					

Needed Resources and Services

Major Theme Code	Resources/Services	# References by Question		Discussed at Public Meeting				
				Auburn	Enumclaw	Sammamish	Snoqualmie	Vashon
15	Regulatory Flexibility & Efficiency: Improve system by adapting codes to meet agriculture needs, technical assistance, and shortened permit process	#14	17	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	57					
		#17	12					
		#18	0					
		Total:	86					
17	Prioritization of Rural Interests: Educational resources, technical assistance, support for infrastructure, and promotion of local agriculture	#14	1	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	0					
		#17	43					
		#18	0					
		Total:	44					
16	Financial Assistance: Suggestions include cost-share and incentives through lowering taxes and permit fees to purchase land, equipment and building	#14	22	X	X	X	X	X
		#15	0					
		#16	0					
		#17	20					
		#18	0					
		Total:	42					

Appendix F: Survey Responses to Questions #14-18

The following tables categorize the all survey responses for each of the five open-ended survey questions (i.e. #14-18). The “APD” column represents where the survey respondent farms. The response rate note in the “Response” column is the percent of surveys of the 89 surveys that responded to that question.

Question#14: How is your farm operation changing?

ID	APD	Response (N=77, 87% response rate)
2	Snoqualmie	way too much sediment setting on property from upstream erosion
4	Snoqualmie	complexities of regulations of farming along shorelines of rivers and streams
5	Snoqualmie	moving from wholesale to direct marketing
6	Snoqualmie	We are growing. We have the capacity to deliver bigger and bigger quantities of quality, local produce to the community. But flooding, in my opinion in part due to development and tight lining upstream are making our beautiful, fertile valley more and more difficult to farm in. But we are going to stay!
7	Snoqualmie	Attempts to capture more value-added \$. Diversifying/vertically integrate.
8	Snoqualmie	More difficult to grow crops because of drainage.
10	Snoqualmie	Necessity for year round production, facilities in floodplain without devastation and planning for this. Storage crops for year round sales not able to bank on crops growing fields due to "flood contamination."
11	Snoqualmie	The season for growing is shortening. The cost for flood recovery is rising. The need for structures and pads to raise equipment is becoming required rather than optional.
12	Snoqualmie	We are growing (we hope) to respond to ever-increasing demand for locally grown food by regular people, restaurants, etc.
13	Snoqualmie	Hard to grow, work and market to pay mortgage.
14	Snoqualmie	No longer able to grow over winter. Shortening our farmstand marketing season. Focusing on fewer and most profitable products.
15	Snoqualmie	Shorter selling season/ more concentrated sales season. Farm weddings.
16	Snoqualmie	Every year is a new experience, trying new techniques, learning from mistakes, talking to neighbors (farmers). Every year we are striving to add more infrastructure so that at some time in the future we can farm fulltime before we get too old and tired.
17	Snoqualmie	Trying to survive floods. Economic losses drastic.
20	Enumclaw	We are going backwards at this present time due to low milk pricing and high feed costs.

ID	APD	Response (N=77, 87% response rate)
21	Snoqualmie	The flooding is impacting us more and more every year, beaver issues, longer times getting out on the fields in spring, wetter in fall. We are experiencing more floods per year, and larger flooding than we used to. Have been impacted by flooding more often now in spring time during calving season. Maybe forced to switch from cow/calf raising our own animals to only being able to buy yearlings and have nothing during the winter due to impacts from flooding. This is not something our customers want to do as it's difficult to find grass-fed yearlings to buy. We've also recently noticed it more and more difficult to get all the hay in we need due to weather and likely will need to change to making more haulage and less hay. It is harder to sell, but we do like to as a more optimal feed for cattle. However we have to hire it made as we have equipment for small bales and not the big round bales so it's more expensive. I'd like to hear what others think the reason behind this are: climate change? Global warming? The fact we don't clean rivers out anymore? Development" and what are the trends looking like? Are we just experiencing a phase or is it going to continue to get worse and do we need to change our operation?
22	Enumclaw	Urbanization. Can no longer cover cost of doing business.
23	Vashon	As more people become more aware of where their food comes from, we have a growing demand for product.
26	Snoqualmie	<p>Oak Hills Vegetable Farms was started by my parents in 1952. It was farmed until 2000 in the Roy area of Pierce County. Urban development made it impossible to continue at that site. We follow the political area closely. We were given a good 10 year head start to development plans. We either move to another location or stop. We decided to sell the property off in 5 acre parcels. Place important language into the contracts concerning farming practices. We protect trees, hills and land with attorneys. It worked well and moved on. We took several years off and began planning. We have planted into several areas and now are getting ready to open a new site in King County. Company press release in February 2009. My father and mother, Richard H. and Florence Wheeler are the founders of the Olympia Farmers Market. We are still involved in 6 farmers markets. The farming practice is still the same for us today as it was in 1952. Except we do not use the amount of chicken fertilizer we did in Roy from Wilcox farms.</p> <p>Bottom line is this. If you are not willing to make farming a way of life, you will never stay successful with commercial or small lot farming. It is blood, sweat and tears. But its rewards can be big. When times are tough, the farming minds kick into high gear! See you at all the meetings.</p>
29	NonAPD	Less monies available for environmental education means more emphasis for me on making money from horse camps, clinics, boarding, trail rides, etc.
30	Enumclaw	hard to find farm labor. Too many people don't want to work.
31	No response	it's not tho it is becoming more profitable
32	No response	more higher value crops with greater emphasis on marketing, merchandising, value added and consumer ready products and a diversification of market segments, diversification of crops and selling the farm experience
34	No response	I am a new farmer. I have been doing this for 3 years. My operation is growing.
35	No response	I like the fact that we now have a USDA mobile slaughter unit. That is better for animals. I don't like the fact that not enough people can raise hay or make silage.
36	No response	Changed from conventional to organic dairying
37	No response	it is not

ID	APD	Response (N=77, 87% response rate)
38	Snoqualmie	We just switched from horse grazing. These draft horses were for recreation (served a carriage business), though they were capable of horse farming (i.e. plow work, etc.).
40	Snoqualmie	getting wetter; plan on more cultivation of land
41	No response	It changes every year as we try and anticipate new items for market.
42	No response	my farm will change to a better farm if I can get solved my land problem.
43	Lower Green	We want to expand into other u-pick small fruits and crops and require 2 greenhouses to do salad greens and tomatoes. We want to go from part-time to full-time within the next 5-6 years.
45	Lower Green	?
46	No response	not much just gets bigger every year.
48	Vashon	Expanding.
49	Enumclaw	changing from haying to grazing
50	NonAPD	Have gone from traditional farming and the use of synthetic fertilizers & pesticides/herbicides to organic methods, including crop rotation, winter cover crops, natural pesticides, etc.
51	Snoqualmie	Our partner wants to sell their share, and we are trying to raise the funds needed to buy them out. We are planning to add new vegetable growing areas (high tunnels).Future plans include more blueberries, fruit trees, grapes and a small winery.
52	NonAPD	main problem is water
53	Lower Green	Due to limited acreage to lease the farm is shifting from perennial to more annual crops. Leased land in APD necessary for crop rotation was sold to developer.
54	Enumclaw	Growing by 50% this year.
55	Enumclaw	Spending too much money on feed and overall operation costs. Even though it's an ag prod district and development rights are sold, the affects of urban sprawl affect us and make farming difficult. Price of milk fluctuates too much. No concerted effort locally to do anything to preserve dairy farming, most of the focus is on small crop farmers.
56	Enumclaw	darigold controls the price of milk and we have to milk more cows to make ends meet, but more cows means more feed, more expense and more manure. we do not have the land available to spread manure anymore will all the parcels of land cut into small hobby farms. This also restricts us from producing local feed; it's not worth planting corn in a 5 acre parcel.
57	Enumclaw	I'm still developing.
58	NonAPD	High demand for local food and organics
60	Upper Green	more restrictions
61	Enumclaw	Growing smaller plants for limited size yards
62	Upper Green	I'm diversifying more so when I have a slow year selling livestock, hopefully the herbs and berries will sell and vice versa.
63	Enumclaw	more value added
65	Enumclaw	just growing bigger and better!
66	Enumclaw	It's harder and harder to lease other fields at a fair price now that the land is so valuable.
67	Enumclaw	Government control and restriction
69	No response	Looking at implementing more green practices.
70	No response	The economy downturn has effected the value of our product, (negatively), while at the same time costs have gone up (fuel, feed).
71	Snoqualmie	growing slowly very hard to do while working part-time, labor impossible to find or afford

ID	APD	Response (N=77, 87% response rate)
72	Sammamish	Becoming more intensive as well as gradually extending the seasons by growing in hoop houses.
73	Snoqualmie	We will be utilizing more of our land to meet the customer demand.
74	Snoqualmie	I am adding things as I learn things I add more and more. Our goal is to be as self sustaining as possible. I would like to learn how to rotate animals through a winter pasture and then grow grain on it. I am also trying to learn more about meat production for selling.
75	NonAPD	I operated our farm as a CSA for seven years, before my arthritis forced me to retire from growing food for sale. We have a large variety of children-friendly livestock and grow an abundance of crops so member families can have a monthly farm experience. As the weather seems to be shifting to colder springs, I am relieved to not be growing food for sale. We live in the foothills east of the Snoqualmie Valley and have a relatively shorter growing season.
76	Snoqualmie	We are trying very hard to expand our acreage under production, but are severely limited by access to water (need an ag well to bring new ground into use) and lack of buildings to store anything out of the rain. We feel there is an almost unlimited market for what we grow, but we are really struggling to expand our acreage because we have no infrastructure.
78	Lower Green	Transitioning to purchase and become fulltime operation, 100% of income within ten years
79	Enumclaw	My farm operation is changing daily.
80	Snoqualmie	Transitioning cows elsewhere so we can add more goats to our acreage. Recent flooding has really affected our pastures for grazing purposes.
81	Enumclaw	Due to economy I've rescued several horses bound for slaughter and now I'm overstocked.
82	Enumclaw	So far, I have not been impacted.
83	NonAPD	urban agriculture is growing
84	NonAPD	It really isn't except for more diversification into forest products and no more expansion in the nursery.
85	Snoqualmie	Expanding
87	NonAPD	more sustainability focused
90	Snoqualmie	We are a new farm, and we are trying to be both financially and environmentally sustainable. At this point, my belief is that environmental sustainability means that, at any given time, we need to have 2-3 times the acreage used for growing vegetables lying fallow under cover crop or pasturing ruminant animals. Because of the flooding, we are not in a position to achieve what is truly sustainable right now. However, we are constantly striving to achieve an acceptable level of soil health.
91	Snoqualmie	We run our farm using organic, biodynamic and permaculture methods. Our farm is always changing, quite literally...
92	Vashon	Trying to find non-traditional ways to get more land to use.
93	Vashon	becoming more profitable each year (14 years)
94	Vashon	Growing! Double the area for row crops additional 20% greenhouse space.
96	Snoqualmie	I have been contemplating expanding to a major showcase permaculture and biodynamic farm. Given the difficulties of dealing with King County, I am seriously contemplating selling of my 85 acres (currently 20 acre parcels), and moving to a county that is more friendly to farmers.
97	Vashon	changing that I have diversified my product

ID	APD	Response (N=77, 87% response rate)
98	NonAPD	cleaner
99	Snoqualmie	Feed is a lot more expensive and also property taxes. Last year the price for 700 to 800 hundred pound cattle was eighty some cents per pound. This is the same price as in the 1980's, yet alfalfa hay in the 1980's was 65 dollars per ton. Last year a ton of hay was nearly two hundred dollars. In Western Washington a cow raising a calf and the calf will consume three tons of hay per year with six months of pasture.

Question#15: What kinds of resources or services do you need to be a successful farmer in the future?

ID	APD	Response (N=71, 80% response rate)
2	Snoqualmie	resources to ag community
3	Snoqualmie	easier, more streamlined, and less expensive well digging and building permitting process
4	Snoqualmie	simpler solutions and permits for replacing a culvert with a bridge for fish safety over a stream to get equipment from one field to another. This should not be so complicated.
5	Snoqualmie	marketing assistance, rebuilding of infrastructure (processing services, etc) permit assistance, regulatory relief. <u>Flood relief.</u>
6	Snoqualmie	Let us put the infrastructure in that we need!
7	Snoqualmie	Irrigation ponds- esp. integrated into current wetlands. Support with other County departments: transportation-- runoff; Health dept: process facilities permit/technical assistance DDES: clearing/drainage- creek clean out (creeks like ditches silt in) FPP on-farm processing at reasonable cost. Need protection from upland development runoff.Drainage help-drain tile install and maintenance.
8	Snoqualmie	Make permit process faster. Help us with ditching. Dam on Middle Fork Snoqualmie.
10	Snoqualmie	Farm worker housing, legislative push through with less fees, less time and less permitting of land use attorney fees, farm buildings. Ability to create heightened land/dykes to protect existing fields and buildings. Flood and drop insurance for multifaceted compounds and diverse crop productions.
11	Snoqualmie	We need DDES/gov reps who can take us through the building/pad process and a lower fee schedule for permits. Control development above the valley floor. Control of clearing above and around the APD.
12	Snoqualmie	Farm worker housing, wells to bring new ground into production, flood protection
13	Snoqualmie	Easier way to get things to sellers. Hard to find outlets, sometimes very picky and hard to work with.
16	Snoqualmie	It is recognized that urban development is slow at this time; however I respectfully request that the County consider doubling the TDR credit.
17	Snoqualmie	A dam. It would also be nice to have the dairy industry back in King County. It has the perfect weather conditions and pastures for milk production. Milk is more flavorful when cows are let out to pasture. Also more profitable.
20	Enumclaw	A methane digester and more land.

ID	APD	Response (N=71, 80% response rate)
21	Snoqualmie	The Snoqualmie Valley is not located in a great area to be able to access any mobile units. Tho there are such in Skagit and Pierce, I have been told the Skagit unit won't come down this far (as well as the co-op is full) and I find it hard to believed we'd be able to schedule the Pierce unit. Nor do I want to really deal with anything that far away and trust the scheduling would work out. I know you can sign on early to almost guarantee use, but not sure it's still worth it and it's still not clear to me how the cut/wrap would work. I'm not interested on have the time to deal with sending folks down south to pick up their orders or doing any deliveries. Also, if the flooding/weather calms down and we don't keep having increasing floods we'd continue as we today and would be fine with our current operation.
22	Enumclaw	Lower taxes. Lower payroll taxes. Lower property taxes. Higher ag product prices.
23	Vashon	We need major mud management/ winter water drainage systems as we are in a valley on Vashon Island. We need much more than \$5,000 match from KingConservation.We need a bigger barn to accommodate more feed, cure and store more produce, and to eliminate the many roof lines from little sheds draining water into our pasture.King County permit process is prohibitively expensive and cumbersome. Why will it require a septic review to build a barn? The cost of permit will make the cost of barn construction out of reach for us.A barn will also allow us to offer off season/ on site workshops and classes, which will potentially offer additional farm income, making it possible to make a living on the farm.
24	NonAPD	Need to make it easier to have accessory uses to small farms like retailing, processing, and even unrelated activities that will bring the public to our small farms.
26	Snoqualmie	Soil that is not diseased from improper growing.
28	NonAPD	more land
29	NonAPD	Support for horse raising & keeping in King County.
30	Enumclaw	The biggest challenge with King County is that it is too hard to get permits. They cost too much and take too long to get. We need more cost share and incentives, not more regulations. It is very difficult to develop a farm under the current system. I had to designate my entire farm as a wetland just to get a permit to renovate a barn that was falling down. I need more and better cost share. It takes 90 - 100 days for King County to give me a check. It takes the Feds 2 weeks. The County needs to be more efficient with this.
31	No response	nothing - it's all right here in king co and plenty of land to be successful (well okay maybe more sun so that I can grow better toms)
32	No response	reduced time spent on government interface... more freedom to operate/ less management time and money devoted to regulations as this does not pay one bill. Paying bills and generating profits are generated by sales of goods and services to a diversified customer base seeking high quality products or farm experiences.Needed (not in any order): (a) more time free of government regulations, (b) promotion of farm and product awareness, (c) money/grants and low interest loans, (d) good quality people to be forward thinking and creative as part of the team including employees, lenders, government agencies/agents ... all with a can do attitude!, (e) a reliable source of legal irrigation water, and (f) reliable source of legal productive workers

ID	APD	Response (N=71, 80% response rate)
34	No response	I need a customer base that can afford to purchase relatively expensive products. I need to be able to have buildings to support my farm activities. I need to be able to change my operations to suit the market -- different animals, different practices, and different crops. I need to be able to live on or near my operation, or to grow my operation large enough to hire someone to live on or near my operation. I need a small slaughterhouse that will allow me to slaughter animals that are USDA inspected within a 2 hour drive of my operation.
35	No response	We need to rethink the idea of dairy farming to make it more profitable for the FARMER! Try ideas like they have in France. Let the farmer make a buck instead of the middle man. There are too many middle men with their hands out in both the meat and dairy industry. Common sense would fix this whole situation. In France it is perfectly legal for the farmer to sell what he or she produces off his or her own farm. We need grants and lending for young people to get into farming.
36	No response	Control the change in land use so that agriculture can continue and to reduce nuisance complaints. No limits on size of agriculture building. Easier and less cost for permitting. Relaxed regulations on Development properties to accommodate changes in farming. Farm housing for employees and retirees allow for sharing of manure for digester projects. Realistic evaluation for land values for farming on Development Right lands.
37	No response	Access to quality technical and scientific support, a good network of farming groups. A voice in the community. The ag commission and King CD as well as the King county ag programs have become too political and bureaucratic. The folks at the King county conservation district are not very technically astute in the science of agriculture. The workshops and plans are very much the same as they were 10 years ago and are repetitious and not geared towards crops farmers or crop science, WSU extension is more appropriate in some ways.
38	Snoqualmie	Need to install a bridge of some type over a salmon-bearing creek in order to access another 20-30 acres of farmable land adjacent to a creek restoration project. Also need to be allowed by zoning to repurpose dairy barns located on RA-10 lot away from livestock uses to storage/business uses. As mentioned above, these barns are close (30 feet) to creek and highway 203, and not appropriated to livestock (in order to prevent water pollution and collisions), and yet this is the use the county zoning enforcement officers are encouraging for us. What we need is to be able to rent surplus barn space to others in order to support these historic buildings and preserve them for future ag. uses. Otherwise they will just fall apart since we don't have the money to maintain them under the current zoning rules. Reduced flooding will also be necessary for continued successful farming here. The increased intensity and frequency of flooding recently is proving damaging to crops. My guess is that development on the upland parts of the Snoqualmie Valley is contributing to the flooding trends. Additionally, the mapping of floodway versus floodplain appears to be inaccurate and thus overly restrictive on our property. For example, drilling a well would be useful for our ag. uses and it would be allowed if our observed patterns of flood movement were reflected in the classification of the floodway versus floodplain. We need a realistic way to appeal this classification and get permission for a well for irrigation.
40	Snoqualmie	Continued support of current program
41	No response	Continued expansion of WSU classes, etc.
42	No response	We need the KC to clean up the street ditch every year. Due to the water flood from the ditch of the street and back up to our property and stop the neighbor that doing their illegal operation.

ID	APD	Response (N=71, 80% response rate)
43	Lower Green	Extension services, a loan to buy land.
45	Lower Green	security of land lease
48	Vashon	Economic recovery to help sustain market.
49	Enumclaw	support
50	NonAPD	Having more productive land available to grow crops & livestock. Also support by our agricultural agencies/resources to encourage new people to get into farming & marketing our products locally. Stop taxing small farms out of the business and encourage more organic ag-businesses.
51	Snoqualmie	More educational seminars and workshops. Land, building, and equipment financing to buy out our partner and pay for planned changes. Help with grant & subsidy requests.
52	NonAPD	water
53	Lower Green	The future is with the younger generation. More training, economic and technical support relevant to regional forms of agriculture are badly needed. Regeneration of the agriculture infrastructure will help younger/new farmers to succeed. County government has to re-focus from urban/environmental issues to rural/agricultural issues in order for agriculture to survive.
54	Enumclaw	The ability to maintain my land quickly and efficiently by being able to clear and grade and manage flood water without having to go through the permitting process.
55	Enumclaw	Restrict building in rural areas. develop a local market for milk that will work. If we got more for our milk we could have less cows, less manure and less pollution problems.
56	Enumclaw	local place to sell milk, development of a local milk, cheese or yogurt outlet that we can ship milk to that will sell as local produce. if we can supply and process in the Enumclaw area we can maybe reduce the numbers of cows we have to milk to break even. A local marketing strategy for manure related products.
58	NonAPD	Puget Sound Fresh and Cascade Harvest Coalition
60	Upper Green	need disposal for dead animals; need disposal for recycle stuff; cleaning existing ditches on plateau
61	Enumclaw	when the county buys ag products contact the APD growers about selling their commodities
62	Upper Green	Fix the cam so we don't float away!
67	Enumclaw	County and State to stop changing laws and restrictions all the time
69	No response	It depends on whose idea of successful I use. If it is the county it may mean I bring additional revenue and follow all the requirements provided now and in the future. If it's my idea of successful it means I produce a product which others buy and I can afford to stay on the farm.
70	No response	Tax incentives, promotion programs
71	Snoqualmie	More land...affordable
72	Sammamish	Not having houses or warehouses built on farm land. Access to water and the ability to control water run off in areas where the water table is close to the surface in the spring (that is, all that fertile soil that was once a lake bed after the retreat of the glaciers from the last ice age, i.e., the Sammamish and Snoqualmie Valleys).
74	Snoqualmie	Mobile meat slaughter and packing (USDA if possible), relax restrictions on commercial kitchens for farmers, keep organic farming legal and affordable--lots of legislation out there making it harder--I would get certified organic except for the price. It would also be helpful if you did more teaching about marketing. Also, I would like to be able to teach sustainability classes.

ID	APD	Response (N=71, 80% response rate)
75	NonAPD	Better weather would help. I could use some help with marketing our unique form of membership farm.
76	Snoqualmie	We will need:- water for irrigation- housing for seasonal workers (and ourselves!!)- storage facilities for tractors, tools, seed, etc.- affordable land so we can own our own farm rather than lease.
78	Lower Green	Availability of affordable farmland close to market
79	Enumclaw	The elimination of wasteful government spending would be a great start if you are asking what resources and conditions I need from King County to be increasingly successful.
80	Snoqualmie	Help with farm plan. I signed the agreement two years ago and still waiting for a plan.
81	Enumclaw	Keep horses in farm category
84	NonAPD	Simplified permitting to allow a farmer to take quick advantage of extra time and money that may not be there by the time permit is issued. Lower permit fees, increased site specific flexibility and much better communication and competency from permitting agency.
85	Snoqualmie	Continued cooperators with small fruit/berry farms
87	NonAPD	healthy agricultural economy
90	Snoqualmie	Successful farming in the Snoqualmie Valley requires both nothing and everything. Currently, my farm leases land from a local landowner. Zoning codes and building restrictions mean that I have to commute to my farm. Being a commuter farmer is fine, but it makes raising livestock (necessary, in my opinion, for true sustainability) near impossible. Allowing farmers to construct permanent living quarters in the valley opens a dangerous can of worms, because non-farmers with money (i.e. equestrian enthusiasts) will surely exploit any regulation that permits, for instance, ag-related structures, dwellings, etc. The problem in the Snoq. Valley is that all the infrastructure farmers are currently using was built back in the dairy farming days, when the farms were 3-400 acres. Now, much of that land has been subdivided, with what seems like mainly equestrian properties occupying the homes and barns, and people like me renting the land that has nothing on it. If real farming is going to happen in the APD (like it should, given the title APD), laws, rules, regulations, etc must be written to ensure that real farmers can live and thrive on their land. When I say "real farmers" I mean farmers who grow or raise a product for humans to eat. Horse boarding, raising hay for horses to eat, shooting clubs, golf courses, sod operations, etc are not "real farmers."
91	Snoqualmie	We need a more cohesive permitting process, especially as it pertains to farm pads and ag buildings.
92	Vashon	business loan, planning loans, product liability/value added food products insurance
93	Vashon	-haven't asked for help thus far. Would like to see a "farms -to-school" with produce on Vashon Island.
94	Vashon	Don't let the gravel mine (Glacier, NW on Maury Island) ruin our aquifer. Farmers markets in small communities need some help with product liability insurance - especially for small businesses, and prepared foods/value added- This insurance can be prohibitively expensive; leaves small farmers markets exposed to frivolous lawsuits, or forced to turn away small producers.
95	Snoqualmie	More support from County and State regulators making it clear that farming is a valuable pursuit in this area. Today we are treated like a nuisance.

Question#16: What are the trends you think are important to your operation and your industry?

ID	APD	Response (N=70, 79% response rate)
2	Snoqualmie	organic, local, slow-food, food safety
3	Snoqualmie	the local food movement
4	Snoqualmie	For the government to streamline its interstation of communication so the farmers doesn't lose so much production time dealing with the government complexities.
5	Snoqualmie	move to direct marketing. Smaller more intensive farming.
6	Snoqualmie	Give schools and government institutions more funding to purchase quality, healthy, local food products. Products that improve you health and your mind. Local growers can't sell their product at cheap industrial prices.
7	Snoqualmie	People want local/organic food- but they'll still only pay so much for it and we can raise only so much of it. --value-added/opportunities needed for farmers. People will pay more for entertainment/rural/farm atmosphere for conferences, weddings, dinners, pumpkin/wagon rides-- maybe these can be integrated into farms, but they should not displace farms and should be carefully planned on a community level.
8	Snoqualmie	More often flooding. Less restrictions on critter pads. More flexible employee housing.
10	Snoqualmie	Continuation of farm to food programs. Continued county support treating farm land differently than urban or rural residential land. Insightful looks at what do for riverbed/ damming/ bank runoff. Stop Snoqualmie River from being dumping ground for developments.
11	Snoqualmie	Ever rising floods. Development around APD.
13	Snoqualmie	Eat local, buy local
14	Snoqualmie	Locally grown movement. Safe food movement. Support your community movement.
15	Snoqualmie	Stable population. Buying local.
16	Snoqualmie	Trends are working favor of small farmers. However, the County needs to be more flexible with temp worker housing, offices in barns, ag structures on farm pads.
17	Snoqualmie	To have federal, state, county and city voters understand the complexities of farming in an over regulated and ignorant government policies that hinder rather than assist agriculture. Example: Gove Dan Evans vetoing dam construction in 1975.
21	Snoqualmie	Trends we're seeing with weather changes are the biggest for us. Also, urban interests in buying local is what's keeping us in business. Continued education, especially in our youth and increases in education all both urban and rural since many of the rural kids now are from urban parents. Increased cooperation between ag/county had been very beneficial to both of us.
23	Vashon	The biggest and most obvious trend is public awareness, desire and appreciation for the source of their food. People either want to learn how to grow more of their own food or know their local farmers and farmer markets.
24	NonAPD	local, organic, specialty farmer's market type crops, public interest in small farms.
26	Snoqualmie	New people will enter the agricultural fields. Due to the economic earthquake we are having in the US. The best thing in the world is tough times. It causes you to think. How can I stay alive!

ID	APD	Response (N=70, 79% response rate)
28	NonAPD	interest in local products is on the upswing --this is very, very good
29	NonAPD	I think that more people will be boarding their horses "at home" to save on the cost of commercial boarding facilities. That means potentially more environmental impacts (mud, manure, over-grazed pastures, etc.) as well as more people interested in how to properly manage livestock on small acreage.
30	Enumclaw	People need to use more local products. We need to even the marketing playing field. It's too easy for Canada to bring sell their products here.
31	No response	organic, no impacts on environment from chems and other types
32	No response	My farming is a diversified integrated farm with growing, packing, sales and distribution in three counties but King county is the most difficult to operate because of the amount of time, effort and money it takes in dealing with the bureaucrats. So for me to be successful I need the ability to move quickly to take advantage of market opportunities... including change of crops and change of methods of farming... so this means regulatory flexibility or changes and the capital to complete the task. The capital comes in the form of money, equipment, personnel, and personal time but if the regulatory burden is too great then the rest will not matter because it can't get done when needed.
34	No response	Land is being cut into increasingly smaller chunks. No one will ever put together large parcels for agriculture, so the trend will be to have smaller and smaller chunk of land and smaller and smaller farms in the urban areas. In eastern Washington it is popular when land is subdivided to add CC&Rs (covenants, conditions and restrictions) that basically outlaw certain agricultural activities in land otherwise zoned agricultural. I need land that has reasonable clear boundaries on its use --- the base county zoning, for instance --and I need my neighbors to not be able to control what I do on my land. I will respond to the market, but I need the flexibility to do things that are common/good/best practice without fear of neighbors being able to block or interfere. King counties current setback requirements for pigs to be 90' from property lines means that you cannot keep pigs on lots less than an acre wide, or smaller than an acre in general. Remember that farms will be getting smaller and smaller as time goes by. Setback will gradually eliminate pigs from the possible farms in King County. Pigs particular are known as "mortgage lifters" -- they are livestock that are a proven winner for urban markets. King County is hostile to small pig farmers.
35	No response	The biggest one is the slow and sustainable food and clothing movement.
36	No response	Producing and consuming more local foods.
37	No response	Sustainable development, local markets, more innovative ways of doing business
38	Snoqualmie	Increased interest in locally produced food and better access to markets for these products. Also increased interest in and prioritization of environmental protection, which is also important but at conflict often with agricultural uses. Would like to see a more case-by-base-oriented balance of these competing priorities.
40	Snoqualmie	Continued promotion and education of the public as to the importance of local farms.
41	No response	Not enough west side farmers for the number farmer markets.
43	Lower Green	Local food awareness, the slow food movement, public education and interest in keeping out food and farms here and healthy
45	Lower Green	buy local, farming without chemicals
46	No response	smaller growers having a market.
48	Vashon	Local and organic food movement expansion.
49	Enumclaw	horse boarding, training

ID	APD	Response (N=70, 79% response rate)
50	NonAPD	King County in cooperation with local business could show a greater encouragement of the smaller/family owned farms. We need to continue the education of future farmers and support the farms in producing a greater diversity of crops and sustainable practices. Support supplementary co-operation between local farms, governmental agencies, educational institutions and businesses such as restaurants, markets, grocery stores to work together to support the local agricultural economy.
51	Snoqualmie	Locally grown food, organic production and customer education of on farm food production systems. Hands on opportunities for interested volunteers. Agritourism and local school tours.
52	NonAPD	changing technology
53	Lower Green	Increasing opportunities for direct marketing.Increased interest in locally grown farm products.Increased interest in organically grown products.Increase in permitted agriculture related activities on farm.Loss of infrastructure and rising costs.Increasing burden of environmental and ESA regulations.Decreasing availability and increasing cost of farmland.Increasing incompatible land-use in and around Ag districts.
54	Enumclaw	Give back control of land management to the individual landowners and reduce the bureaucracy in government /environmental regulations so that we can make a profit!
56	Enumclaw	development of a local niche, just like the beef/pork/lamb producers who can sell off the farm and get a decent price for their produce. We are been encouraged or forced to take a buy out just to get rid of milk off the market. It's a tiny band aid on a large wound.
58	NonAPD	marketing, buy local
60	Upper Green	lack of anyone who want to labor on a farm
61	Enumclaw	keep ag subsidies. Keep Puget Sound Fresh.
62	Upper Green	Internet- people shop and research farms that way.
64	Enumclaw	responsible breeding - rescue
67	Enumclaw	Marketing/ sales prarlion (sp?)
70	No response	Horses need to be considered livestock, and raising and selling them considered commercial agriculture.
71	Snoqualmie	Buy local
72	Sammamish	Direct to consumer and restaurant sales. Zoning that recognizes the importance of having farm land near population centers.
74	Snoqualmie	LOCAL sales Local food. Teach people how to be more sustainable themselves. Organics...biodynamics.
75	NonAPD	As a member of Sno-Valley Tilth, I strongly endorse the Policy Statement submitted by our organization. I think it is imperative to define agriculture as "food for people" and act swiftly and strongly to ensure a local food supply for King County. I was born here, fell in love with local farmland as a child, and support ALL efforts to protect farmland for farming.
76	Snoqualmie	Tons of support for sustainable local food from our friends in the cities. People are also taking a closer look at farming practices rather than just accepting that certified "organic" is be-all and end-all. Thoughtful farmers who constantly question their assumptions about sustainability and always aim to do better will have the most credibility with the public as people become more educated about the sources of the food they eat.
78	Lower Green	Organic, local, nontraditional markets (CSAs, restaurant partnerships, on farm events and marketing)

ID	APD	Response (N=70, 79% response rate)
79	Enumclaw	Cutting out the BS and having a direct relationship with customers. Also, trends aren't important. Trends are fleeting.
80	Snoqualmie	Consumer awareness on the importance of buying local.
81	Enumclaw	Constant encroachment by government, development
82	Enumclaw	Farm Plans are important as well as livestock (i.e. Cattle & horses)management

Question#17: What are your plans for your farm property in the future?

ID	APD	Response (N=73, 82% response rate)
2	Snoqualmie	same- no change
3	Snoqualmie	keep growing veggies... if permitting, zoning allows, perhaps a small, once a week farm-fresh restaurant
4	Snoqualmie	poss. Nature conservancy
5	Snoqualmie	continue to do dairy and hopefully process our own milk to add value to our products.
6	Snoqualmie	We are going to keep farming.
7	Snoqualmie	We want to keep growing organic food.
8	Snoqualmie	Expanding as land becoming available.
10	Snoqualmie	To continue farming organic produce while increasing educational opportunities to promote environment and sustainable agriculture.
11	Snoqualmie	To build a home and barn and pad.
12	Snoqualmie	We'd like to bring currently fallow land into production, but we need water (ag well).
13	Snoqualmie	Increased # of greenhouses
14	Snoqualmie	Continue growing food?
15	Snoqualmie	Possible partnering with daughter and son in law
16	Snoqualmie	We want to complete some improvements wherein we can move to and live at the farm. Planning on putting another 5 acres into production this year. We will need to replace our pump house and well components after the January flood.
17	Snoqualmie	Hopefully to continue farming in a lesson flooding situation. We have the best temperatures for crop production but do not do well under water.
20	Enumclaw	Hopefully if we are still in business to have digester put in and milk more cows.
21	Snoqualmie	This is a big unknown for us. Mostly due to the price of land in King County has made it difficult for us to purchase a large piece of property, even in it's located in the flood plain. And, as mentioned above, if we have to change to a seasonal operation due to weather/flood issues we will have change our marketing and/or risk losing clients that want animals born/raised all on the same farm. The bottom line is it depends, if the flooding continues to get worse, we may just quit farming. We could switch to haying/haylage only operation but that's not as profitable nor something we'd really enjoy. The increased costs the last couple years in having to rebuild fences more often, hire crews, and costs for cleaning up everyone else's garbage that comes in all adds to the bottom line. Maybe possibly sell and move to a different climate.
22	Enumclaw	To be able to afford to keep the land whole. Farm/Park/Lease
23	Vashon	Barn; In season workshops and classes; Teaching tours; off season workshops and classes; Food service awareness training; Farm/chef connection

ID	APD	Response (N=73, 82% response rate)
24	NonAPD	On my 7 acres I plan to continue to grow hay and pasture my animals. The property is zoned R4; I would be interested in exploring options to reduce my taxes. We also own an additional 14 acres zoned RA5 nearby. We would be interested in having someone farm this more intensively.
26	Snoqualmie	We will be preparing for the next generation of Wheelers to start farming. Once they go through proper training.
28	NonAPD	I hope to farm it until retirement, I hope my son will want to continue to farm it
29	NonAPD	see question #14
30	Enumclaw	I plan to renovate my barn to double the size of my furrowing operation. County regs make it difficult to expand and it's too expensive. All I want to do is to tear down a building that is falling down and replace it. It's taken months to get a permit for a roof on a manure storage facility. I have spent over \$700 for this to date. I want to build a small shop but can't because of septic issues even though I don't plan to have any plumbing in the building.
31	No response	same as is
32	No response	The plan in 2009 and 2010 is to farm organic green beans but beyond this it will depend on what can be done to the land to make is usable for other vegetable crops of specialty crops. For example can I ditch, dike, contour, level, etc for nursery crops, cranberries, blueberries, high value veg. etc because if not then I may be limited in what can be done with the land to keep the farm viable. Currently I must grow something that is a very quick/short season crop to mature like green beans because to the drainage issues and the restrictions put on cleaning ditches by the county/state (these are causing me to be disadvantaged compared to other counties). I would like to devise a longer term plan but cannot do that very well because the county/state one or both does not seem to care about the costs of the regulations that are imposed on the farm operation. I would invite a solution of setting out the objectives to be accomplished with the various agencies and if there is great degree of flexibility of implementing then this would be good for the farmer rather than imposing a strict set of rules and processes that must be followed even if they do not make much sense. (back to cleaning the ditch... if the water does not leave the property during the cleaning then why does it have to be pumped around the dredge point? ...in Skagit and Snohomish county this procedure is not implemented even if the water does leave the property during the dredging.)
34	No response	I am buying land in counties other than King to sell to consumers based mostly in King County. I would much rather operate and sell in the same county, but the current King county land use regime makes this impossible. I operate a blog at ebeyfarm.blogspot.com you are welcome to look at my operation and comment there.
35	No response	Keep going, teach interns how to raise sheep on browse. Get more land. I need help with getting more land. We are a non-profit and teach sustainable and slow food and clothing.
36	No response	We are hopeful that our dairy will continue onto the next generation. If not the next generation we would like to have the dairy continue.
37	No response	I am thinking of moving to Skagit County.

ID	APD	Response (N=73, 82% response rate)
38	Snoqualmie	We'd like to be able to use the non-farmable upland parts of the farm property for a small special-events venue in order to support the farmable sections in the valley (also a zoning issue). We do have 20-30 unfarmed acres that we'd like to make available (mentioned above - needs a bridge) either for us or for another for more farming. Would love to rent this part to an organic farmer.
40	Snoqualmie	Continued use of farm as a farm. I also keep 8 horses as part of Children's Hospital summer camp (35 yr volunteer). The horses are a vital part of 2 other camps (Special Care, Rise in Shine). The farm has been certified salmon safe which means that the management practices are enhancing the salmon stream (#2 salmonid). All manure is composted either in bins or field and cultivated by the Hmong farmers.
41	No response	I'm 78, my wife is 76 - would like to continue for 10 more years and see to a young couple who would continue to farm.
42	No response	I will keep my land for my family farming for the future.
43	Lower Green	I hope to buy the land we are on now and continue to expand and diversify our operations to be sustainable and less risky and variable in the income department. We are also interested in improvements to the building including a commercial kitchen.
45	Lower Green	We want to buy the farm we have been renting for 10 years.
48	Vashon	Continue small farm egg production/sales.
49	Enumclaw	horse boarding and training raising of horses, possible breeding, only if colt turns out like his breeding.
50	NonAPD	To continue best organic practices possible and to educate others in how it is done. To work with others who may not have farms to show them how they can do things to support the greater good of the industry. To educate others regarding smart shopping practices and purchasing agricultural products locally. I intend to continue my education in organic practices and marketing and to stay up to date with what is going on in the agricultural industry.
51	Snoqualmie	The current plan is to transfer farm ownership to my daughter and son in law. They both currently work on the farm part-time and have a strong desire to continue the family tradition. They would be the fourth generation to farm this property.
52	NonAPD	none
53	Lower Green	Transitioning farm to younger generation. Exploring new fruit and veg crops. Exploring value added possibilities. Exploring new market possibilities - restaurant, farmers markets, web. Considering landmarking property and shifting to ag-tourism format.
54	Enumclaw	Continue to raise beef and chickens and other personal produce for ourselves and our friends. We would also LOVE to put a pond in so that we could raise fish as well but haven't even considered asking the county about how to do that for fear of being singled out and regulated to death!
55	Enumclaw	to try and stay in business
56	Enumclaw	I don't know, as it stands now it does not look good, we are hopeful that the manure digester will put some new life into the industry and help us out in some way, but not sure how.
58	NonAPD	Keep on farming and selling local
60	Upper Green	possibly
62	Upper Green	Continue current operations- keep learning and getting better at it
64	Enumclaw	continue to raise horses
65	Enumclaw	In 20 years (when retire) will sell to someone who wants to farm.

ID	APD	Response (N=73, 82% response rate)
67	Enumclaw	Would like to keep and raise cattle 20 years.
68	Enumclaw	losing land to development.
69	No response	Continue to raise a small heard of Friesian horses. Small enough to sustain them during the summer months on the grass I grow.
70	No response	Reduce number of livestock until market improves.
71	Snoqualmie	Add more greenhouses
74	Snoqualmie	Keep learning and growing... :)
75	NonAPD	Unsure. We continue to consider models for sharing our lovely land with others. Most of our property (90%) is in natural vegetation - we farm on less than one acre. We will continue to grow food and livestock, but beyond that, we aren't sure.
76	Snoqualmie	That depends - see comments above.
78	Lower Green	Continue farming, eventually create bed & breakfast and develop on-premises community and university education opportunities - seminars and internships
79	Enumclaw	Farming
80	Snoqualmie	Continue to grow our dairy goat herd. Purchase cow's milk from other local dairies in the valley.
81	Enumclaw	same
82	Enumclaw	I will continue to produce hay and board horses.
84	NonAPD	Limited expansion and few improvements. We are where we want to be. No plans for retirement but at some point may rent out nursery or sell property to enable us to retire. Will probably move out of W. Washington to area with lower costs and less urban environment.
87	NonAPD	Keep growing food for our family
90	Snoqualmie	Due to the high price of homes on acreage in the APD and the restrictive building codes (appropriately so without regulations ensuring that only real farmers may build), I plan on continuing to lease land in the APD to farm and keep commuting there from the city. Because I do not own my land, I have no real plans for any of the major improvements needed to turn my small vegetable farm into a larger operation.
91	Snoqualmie	We are working with Salmon Safe and King Conservation. We'd like to bring in native plants and also do small orchard work.
92	Vashon	intensive, small scale food production
93	Vashon	We are both 38 years old and plan to farm until we die.
94	Vashon	More intensive use of the land.
95	Snoqualmie	No plans with flooding and no recourse to solving the problem.
96	Snoqualmie	I am either going to sell my property off as 4estate sized lots, given that I am only 15 minutes to Microsoft. I would rather create a world class demonstration farm, with a conference center on my rural zoned piece, but I keep thinking about 21 acres, and other projects in my area. I have been told by most of the developers of large scale projects in King County that they will never do another project in King County. I think of Ken Bering who said that over 10 years ago. And these people stood to make large profits. Why should a farmer, looking to make a much smaller profit go through the same aggravation?
97	Vashon	Don't know
99	Snoqualmie	Wanted to farm as long as I was able and not giving up to much of my pension to make the farm work.

Question#18: What concerns do you have regarding farming in King County?

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
2	Snoqualmie	More competition for land, its use especially from non-farm uses. Lack of flexibility as land owner to deal with everyday issues as farmer. Permitting quagmire.
3	Snoqualmie	Development and logging = bigger floods. Horse farms = more expensive farmland. Inconsistent enforcement of building and zoning codes = only the rich and the scofflaws get to build. Not enough farmers in general to meet demand in our region.
5	Snoqualmie	Loss of infrastructure assisting farmers within the county. Loss of staff assistance. Heavy weight of "fish concerns" us. Other viable land uses. Flooding and its impact on the farms/farm infrastructures. Farms and residents are more important than the sacred "FEMA Flood Insurance Rates."
6	Snoqualmie	Land prices. Over -development on the hillsides and ridges above the farming valleys which is making the flooding worse. FLOODING! (I'm on the Snoqualmie River.)
7	Snoqualmie	Over-development/illegal development--changing the use of ag lands and leading to over-valuation and underutilization as food farms (such as camp, conference/wedding facilities, horses, wineries). Would like to see a states focus on food/forage farming and programs actively supporting that and discouraging other. Farming is not a high \$ business, yet farmers are paying full price for land (even FPP land), septic systems, permits, structures. Consider "flood-appropriate farming" in the flood areas? Maybe animal operations and perennial crops should not be in the flood zone.
8	Snoqualmie	Will we be able to adapt to environmental change? Can I get help to drain my land?
10	Snoqualmie	How can we deal with the floods, limited operation with spring floods and early fall floods. Expenses of facilities, labor, materials, dumping and clean up. Lost products to sell at increases labor and infrastructure expenses aren't going to work.
11	Snoqualmie	King County will need decide how to keep farm land and farmers in the area in a real way. King County will need to preserve farmland with the surrounding land that impacts us. The County needs to require builders to maintain their own drainage. To build around our farms seems easier than for farmers to respond to the effects of their building on farms.
13	Snoqualmie	Development sends too much water downhill and into streams and rivers
14	Snoqualmie	We need new farmers to be educated/encouraged. Support processing. If it becomes expensive for farmers to grow the food, our prices will go up. This is a time in our economy when our customers will not support that - money is a concern.
15	Snoqualmie	Increased flooding issue. Continued development at hills surround the valley.
16	Snoqualmie	The Snoqualmie needs to be removed from the KCSDM as being a "receiving body" whereby it is exempt from "detention." The Health Dept needs to get its act together and work with farmers.
17	Snoqualmie	Fish and wildlife have too much authority. Are other government agencies afraid of them? The human factor is supposed to be figured into the equation as well but has not been. Absolutely over regulations over a minority group of people. Urban citizens making the rules do not understand the complexities of agriculture.
18	No response	Land that is being speculated for immense building into condo. Let us turn it into farmland instead it really more economic in the long run.
20	Enumclaw	Lack of land and feed costs.

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
21	Snoqualmie	I am not convinced the Executive supports farming. I'd like to see King County follow suit more with what Snohomish County (focus on farming, great processes in place, future of ag mapped out) -perhaps this survey is a start to that. It's still very difficult to deal with ditches and ditch maintenance, and expensive. Permitting is still an issue. We cannot deal with any new regulations. Fencing will always be an issue in the floodplains. Any increases in buffers would dramatically impact any farming operation (I realize many are grandfathered in, but that's today, what may happen in the future?) I know the County has nothing to do with this but the poplar plantations are AWFUL to deal with in terms of the mess and debris they send down, the beavers they bring in. I do not want to see the Ag program at the county dissolved, the program is very important and the staff there are well liked, trusted, and work well with the farmers.
22	Enumclaw	The narrow strip of land between the Cascade Mountains and Puget Sound was beautiful and unique. As each decade passed, more was lost. It is strange that housing developments, strip malls and other development are not held accountable for the permanent nature of their existence. They are named after the things they destroyed- "Deer Run, "Bear Hill," and "Misty Meadow" places that are gone forever. Many of the remaining large tracts of land are owned by individuals. These individuals are not rich corporations that can affect local laws and zoning. Since agricultural lands have not been covered with fill, buildings and concrete, and since many are owned by individuals that can be more easily subdued, the public focuses its frustration there. This is where so many feel they have control. Ironically, this situation leads to impossible regulation and costs. Ultimately, the pressure destroys agriculture and/or people who just want to keep the land whole. A drive down the I-5 corridor shows us that nothing has changed. Large tracts of open space are quickly and permanently being transformed by forces the public seems to have difficulty in controlling. My concern is that people have given up on a solution and are turning a blind eye.
23	Vashon	King County makes all processes prohibitive in expense and complexity. As farmers, we have so little extra time to research proper procedures and protocol. Often we get opposing answers from separate bureaucrats.
24	NonAPD	Land use regulations still seem to make large-lot residential development the only viable economic option for many landowners. We MUST make it easier for rural landowners to make a living on their property. There are some conditional uses that exist, but the time, permitting fees and requirements often make them unrealistic options. We must expand and streamline this if we want a vibrant and sustainable rural economy.
26	Snoqualmie	1. Homes vs. land space; 2. H2O (water); 3. Small acreage areas will become very, very profitable. Planting by the inch.
29	NonAPD	That KC regulations & services support the care & raising of livestock, particularly horses. That the definition "farming" and agriculture includes horses; the boarding, breeding, raising, showing, training or sales of horses. Also horse businesses such as outfitters, camps, clinics, shows, therapeutic riding programs, etc. should be included as agriculture.
40	Snoqualmie	1) Continued development of housing/strip mall, etc.; 2) I am concerned over Department of Revenue and interpretation of ag.; 3) Flooding
41	No response	Taxes- the penalty for agland- 12% compounded annually- for 7 years, is keeping small acreage from being developed and retained as ag/open space.

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
42	No response	My concern of King County, farm land is only few acres left, but KC didn't protect them, so I hope King County should really get all agency together and solve these problems.
43	Lower Green	Affording the land to do it, restrictions on value adding processing, educating kids and new farmers- everybody should be able to identify food in its growing and unprocessed state.
45	Lower Green	None
48	Vashon	Resist livestock registry.
49	Enumclaw	that it is not in king county's long term plans.
50	NonAPD	That we are losing our farm land to development and we are not encouraging people of all ages to get into the agri-business industry. I am also concerned that there are not enough educational opportunities locally for those who are interested in farming.
51	Snoqualmie	King County appears to be trying to improve the probability that farming operations will survive and prosper. Please keep the vision alive. I hope that the King County Ag Commission along with WSU extension will put together the types of educational programs that I now have travel to Snohomish County to get. Thank you for all the changes you have already made, keep up the good work.
53	Lower Green	Increasing environmental/ESA burden on agriculture can kill agriculture in this county. County government from Council-to-Exec-to-Staff is dominated by city dwellers with little or no rural or agriculture experience. Budget and staffing are overwhelmingly dominated by urban/environmental concerns to the detriment of the rural/agricultural population and economy. With continued incorporations of suburban cities, the County's focus should shift to support of their rural/agricultural population, and have the cities cover more of the cost of environmental protection for the impacts they themselves generate.
54	Enumclaw	Hyper-environmentalism run amuck! Get off of our land unless you are willing to purchase it at fair market value. My friends in the dairy industry have flooded this past year because they haven't been able to maintain their own ditch systems. The Bolt decision has done more harm to native salmon and steelhead runs than ANY surface water runoff from ANY farm on this plateau. Reverse Bolt then we can talk about surface runoff. But if you will not then please find other work and LEAVE US ALONE!
55	Enumclaw	cost of doing business here. NRCS helps a lot with free engineering, free technical help and actual money to do things but will they be able to keep helping us.
56	Enumclaw	dairy business will be forced out because the expertise is not in the area to help keep us there. most of the programs from king county and king county conservation district are focused on small farms. NRCS are the only folks left that can relate to the larger producer and help with larger jobs and costs. concerned that king co is ok about letting agriculture go that way and they are not in tune with our needs.
57	Enumclaw	Too much development
59	Enumclaw	I am concerned about losing farms to development. I am concerned about the quality of animal feed. We raise meat chickens and in the book Green, Green, Greenest I read that arsenic can be found in animal feed. This is causing me to go to organic feed at twice the cost. The high cost of feed has risen faster then the price of our hay product.
60	Upper Green	need to keep farms and open space in this county
62	Upper Green	Mansions, Howard Hanson Dam repair
64	Enumclaw	taxes and regulations
67	Enumclaw	Is there going to be a tax on cattle for gas emissions?

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
69	No response	Water. I have a salmon bearing creek on the property border I have worked with King County to improve the condition of the stream bank but this is all for naught it downstream we are causing the stream to slow and flood my pastures. We continue to build housing in areas which used to flood. There are retention ponds added and said to hand the flood. It doesn't. What can I do about it?
70	No response	That more land will be lost to development, and that land lost for agriculture use.
71	Snoqualmie	Land too expensive, no support system for infrastructure (tractor parts, fertilizers, dairy supplies, etc)
72	Sammamish	Sprawl removing farm land. Land becoming so valuable that it can't be passed on as a farm.
73	Snoqualmie	Not enough protection of land. Trees are being removed/clearcutting is causing too much water run off. Not enough incentives for new farmers to start up. No mentorship program where young can glean from old timers.
74	Snoqualmie	It is so expensive to have land here. I would like to know how to get a property tax break for farming. I worry that we will lose too much farmland and won't be able feed ourselves locally.
75	NonAPD	I believe it is imperative that farmland be protected. We must consider the greater good and the future, even at the expense of individual property rights. I've watched the Green River and Sammamish valleys essentially disappear, and been heartbroken. There are many well-documented reasons for protecting a local foodshed, and we must heed them. I fear the voices of developers and property rights activists thunder too loudly.
76	Snoqualmie	We are concerned that hobby farms and equestrian operations are driving up land prices and wrecking our drainage. Horses are not agriculture. Our neighbors' horses periodically break out of their fences and only pure luck has kept them from doing thousands of dollars of damage to our crops. As it is, they at least cost us several hours of time with each incident that we stop working to try to round them up or keep them from trampling our vegetable crops. Horses are incompatible with farming. Horse operations should NOT benefit from ag property tax exemptions. Urban dwellers should not subsidize the recreational pursuits of horse owners. King County should define agriculture as "Food for People". Before we take any steps to loosen building restrictions in the Snoqualmie APD, we need to make absolutely sure that these changes will foster, not threaten, our ability to grow more food for the people of King County.
78	Lower Green	Expensive land - loss of human-food agriculture to fuel production and other Nonfood producing enterprises

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
79	Enumclaw	Mainly I fear King County. I fear that the county values productive property taxes over productive property. I fear that salmon are dying because government has lost control and foresight. I fear that unnatural natural disasters that destroy farmers are a direct result of King County enabled logging, building, paving, extracting, stripping, clearing, drilling, piping, excavating, and general raping of the land. I fear that farmers are marginalized and driven into the most dangerous, least productive areas so that permits may be issued and construction can commence. I fear that King County has lost touch with agricultural producers, and that too much emphasis has been given on things like buying a "practical" Japanese hybrid city car and not enough emphasis given to getting into a dang 1970s pickup truck made out of U.S. steel and driving out and working beside, spending time, and visiting with farmers. It is impossible to represent farmers unless a person takes the time, puts in the energy, and has the desire, to get to know them. Everyone gives farmers lip service. My biggest concern is that we're all too lazy to give them some sweat services.
80	Snoqualmie	Support from King County in the way of education and resources to bring our dairy to its highest and best use based on our land conditions.
81	Enumclaw	Urban county tends to support urbanization
82	Enumclaw	I am concerned that the do-gooders who don't own horses are going to try to change our way of life out here in the country, by changing horses from livestock to "pets". Which in turn will change our tax status from agricultural to residential. That is ridiculous!
83	NonAPD	Suburban encroachment on farmland. Institutional purchases of food. policies that direct institutions to the lowest bidder school AS garden. farm to cafeteria is OK.
84	NonAPD	Main concern is the cost of land for future generations of farmers. Also the urbanization of rural areas bringing a mentality that often conflicts with the rural values and impedes the ability to continue farming. The increased promotion of farms for urban entertainment is absolutely necessary for both educational purposes and for many, their bottom line. However, it is not something that interests all farmers and I fear that the more traditional farmer may disappear in King County. The county does need to make sure though that regulations continue to be adjusted to allow for these newer retail type endeavors. Small businesses of all kinds need to be allowed to prosper in King County.
85	Snoqualmie	Disappearance of small farms producing food for people
87	NonAPD	Keep farmland for people food, not for equestrian estates which take away farmland and drive up land prices.
89	Sammamish	Need a clear definition of "agriculture" as it pertains to allowed activities that can help food producers (such as critter pads, equipment pads, building of storage or animal shelters in flood plains, etc.) A food producing definition of agriculture in this case would prevent other land users in ag zoned districts from taking advantage of these provisions.

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
90	Snoqualmie	In the long term, I see threats from developers, equestrian interests, flooding, and draconian food-safety laws as the biggest threats. In the short term, I think that under-regulation of land explicitly set aside for agricultural production (i.e. the APDS) has allowed profligate misuse of farmland and has driven up the price of potential farm properties, making economically sustainable farming on one's own property nearly impossible. I believe that the County must write codes and regulations that prohibit any and all new buildings, homes, farm pads, structures, etc for anyone in the valley other than people producing food. That is to say, equestrian operations are not farms and their presence in the valley must be discouraged. Also, there is rampant flouting of existing building and zoning codes. Landowners throughout the APD build illegal farm pads, illegally raise their homes, build illegal riding arenas, build illegal barns and sheds, etc. The County does not enforce its own codes. The existence of non-farm-related structures in the APD merely serves to further drive up demand for these properties and makes them even more out of reach for those of us who would like to live and farm our own property one day in the APD.
91	Snoqualmie	It is extremely important that APD's, and specifically the Snoqualmie Valley APD, are preserved not only as farmland, but as farmland that provides food for people. It is important that the Ag Commission understand that the definition of farming or agriculture in the valley must include only farming for the specific purpose of feeding people. All other activities should be banned from the APD. The cost of land and housing is already astronomical. The only way to keep farmers in the Valley is to cease all non-farming operations or those operations where the end result is something other than food for people.
92	Vashon	cost of land
93	Vashon	Would like to see farmers markets in every neighborhood and community.
94	Vashon	I live in fear of DDES. It took 1 yr. to get permit for single-wide mobile home (after DDES initial visit was told 2 weeks) between drainage and fire department not communicating at my expense.
95	Snoqualmie	They are focused on regulation without concern for farming.
96	Snoqualmie	King County. You are recognized as being in the top most difficult 3-5 places to develop. This may not scare off Costco, Wal-Mart, etc, but why should a farmer looking to make a nice farm and decent profit go through the same aggravation as Costco? I am going through a permit nightmare with the County right now, getting a permit to pave 4,000 sq.ft. of existing gravel road. My initial estimate for plan review was over \$22,000. After a letter from my attorney, it's now about half that. Even at \$10,000, that's more to review the plans, than the cost to create the plans and pave the road. So what's it going to be like to actually try to permit and build some new farm structures? 21 acres spent over \$150,000. Given the fact that DDES is worried about their job security, the word on the street is that you are jacking your bills way up for job security. I know of a project on Vashon Island where you actually billed over \$40,000 to review plans for a 900 sq.ft. cabin. So what's it going to cost to review plans for a new barn in the flood plain? What are you going to put me through? Easier to build four homes, and take my millions, than take millions and be treated like a pariah by DDES. This is why people are not farming on farm land in King County. \$22,000 TO REVIEW PLANS FOR PAVING 4,000 SQUARE FEET OF PAVEMENT OVER AN EXISTING GRAVEL ROAD. DOES ANYONE OVER THERE EVEN REALIZE HOW ABURD THIS IS?
97	Vashon	That it truly be protected, more set aside for young farmers to have access to.

ID	APD	Response (N=67, 75% response rate)
98	NonAPD	To make it easier to farm in king county by a bigger property tax brake
99	Snoqualmie	Government employees do stupid things and really believe they are doing the right thing. The purchase of property development rights. Take a look at the map and see all the property that floods or has wetlands, yet they bought the development rights.

Appendix G: Summary of Survey Questions #1-12

Question #1: Do you farm or live in an agriculture production district (APD)?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	61	69%
No	18	20%
No Response	10	11%

Question #2: If so, which one?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Enumclaw	19	21%
Upper Green	2	2%
Lower Green	0	0%
Sammamish	3	3%
Snoqualmie	31	35%
Vashon	6	7%

Question #3: Are you actively farming?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	83	93%
No	2	2%
No Response	4	4%

Question #4: Is farming your primary occupation (more than 50% income)?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	36	40%
No	44	49%
No Response	9	10%

Question #5: How many years have you been farming?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
2 or less	7	8%
3-4	15	17%
5-9	11	12%
10 or more	46	52%
No Response	10	11%

Question #6: Do you own or rent your farmland?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Full Owner	56	63%
Part owner	6	7%
Renter	17	19%
No Response	10	11%

Question #7: Where is your place of residence?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
On the farm	57	64%
Off the farm	20	22%
No Response	12	13%

Question #8: What is the size of the farm (total acres)?

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Less than 5	18	20%
5-9	24	27%
10-49	21	24%
50-179	12	13%
180-499	4	4%
500 or more	0	0%
No Response	10	11%

Question #9: What services have you used? (check all that apply)

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Classes/Training	28	31%
Drainage Assistance	7	8%
Farm Plan	30	34%
Floodplain Management	6	7%
Livestock Management	9	10%
Permit Assistance	12	13%
Puget Sound Fresh	29	33%
TDR	8	9%
Other (see below)	6	7%
No Response	27	30%

Other Responses for Question #9:

get no help from any agency
Garden hotline
Farmers Home Administration loan
Farmland Preservation Program
Cost Share
Heritage Barn Program
conservation and habitat restoration
Salmon Safe Program
afraid to use county help for fear of problems

Question #10: What services have you used? (check all that apply)

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
King County	26	29%
KCD	35	39%
WSU Extension	37	42%
FSA	10	11%
NRCS	13	15%
Other	9	10%
No Response	25	28%

Other Responses for Question #10:

Tilth - Farm Bureau
Seattle Tilth (2)
KC Forestry
Salmon Safe Stewardship Partners (4)
Doesn't know who did farm plan

Question #11: What agricultural practices do you use? (check all that apply)

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Certified Organic	8	9%
Organic, but not certified	44	49%
Cover crop	41	46%
Natural fertilizer	57	64%
Synthetic fertilizer	14	16%
GM Seeds	0	0%
Organic Pesticides	17	19%
Synthetic Pesticides	6	7%
Other	9	10%
No Response	15	17%

Other Responses for Question #11:

organic micronutrients
Bumble bee hives
Landscape cloth to control weeds w/o chemicals
composted horse manure
biodynamic
"natural," humane handling, appropriate BMPs
bio-diesel, local composted manures
IPM
Intensive/high density

Question #12: How do you sell your farm products? (check all that apply)

<i>Response</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Auction	2	2%
Brokerage	1	1%
CSA	16	18%
Farmers Market	30	34%
Farmstand	21	24%
Grocer	10	11%
Institutions	1	1%
Inter-farm sales	8	9%
Internet	6	7%
Restaurants	18	20%
U-pick	14	16%
Wholesaler	17	19%
Other	6	7%
No Response	15	17%

Other Responses for Question #12:

local community members
Renter does fields
Direct to consumer (2)
Websites
government sales
don't sell
word of mouth (3)
pre-picked orders
Retail
Self-provider to our own restaurant
Individuals
Value Added
from the field
check
camps, small niche grocers
neighbor to neighbor